Hafa Adai!

# Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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**POLL RESULTS**

Do you intend to celebrate Valentine's Day this year?

Yes-13

No-44

*Sunday February 17, 2008*

INSIDE

**Signs of Trouble**

Steven Kazmierczak had the look of a boyish graduate student—except for the disturbing tattoos that covered his arms.

Nation...Page 14

**Eve of Kosovo Independence**

Tiny Kosovo—poor, mostly Muslim but feverishly pro-Western—braced itself Saturday for a historic declaration of independence from Serbia, a decade after a war that killed 10,000 people and years of limbo under U.N. rule.

World...Page 16

Police director sues DPS, officers over 2006 arrest. **PAGE 3**

Wiseman: PDO's disproportionate sentences argument has no merit. **PAGE 5**

# CUC owed $600K by private firm

By AGNES E. DONATO
agnes_donato@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

An undisclosed private company continues to get electric service despite owing the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation approximately $600,000.

CUC executive director Anthony Guerrero has said that the company has not been disconnected because it has agreed to a payment plan with the utility.

"To their [company's] credit, they have complied with the agreed upon payment plan," Guerrero told the House of Representatives in a recent meeting.

In a draft budget proposal for fiscal year 2008, the cash-strapped CUC has reported bad debts amounting to $3.18 million.

The CNMI government used to owe CUC tens of thousands of dollars, but both parties have reached a settlement deal.

Many residential customers have had their electric service disconnected due to nonpayment. In a bid to assist them, the previous Legislature passed into law—despite the governor's disapproval—a bill regulating the disconnection of utility ser-

*See CUC on Page 4*

**RELATED NEWS**

Bill to exempt CUC from paying 1 percent of OPA budget introduced.

**PAGE 2**

## Atalig accuses Govendo of destroying Malite order

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Attorney Antonio Atalig has accused Superior Court associate judge Kenneth Govendo of destroying an original order in the Angel Malite probate.

Atalig told *Saipan Tribune* that when he and attorney Reynaldo Yana filed a petition for writ of prohibition in a criminal case, the CNMI Supreme Court directed Govendo to produce his original

*See ATALIG on Page 4*

AP

President Bush and Tanzania's President Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete stand together after they signed the Millennium Challenge Compact at the State House in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, Sunday, Feb. 17, 2008.

## Bush asks Congress to back AIDS program

By BEN FELLER
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

**DAR ES SALAAM, Tanzania** (AP)—President Bush, on a five-nation visit to Africa, challenged Congress on Sunday to renew his global AIDS program.

With backing from Congress, Bush is behind an emergency HIV/AIDS response that is the largest in history to target an infectious disease. It is up for

*See BUSH on Page 4*

**GO CRAB GO!** JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Jesus Untalan cheers for his crab that is leading the "Umang" or Hermit Crab Race during the official kickoff of the 2008 Tinian Hot Pepper Festival Saturday at Tachogna Beach on the beautiful and tranquil island of Tinian. The two-day, island-style fiesta showcased different kinds of locally prepared foods as well as arts and crafts, music, and cultural dances.

# Local

## Bill to exempt CUC from paying 1 percent of OPA budget introduced

A bill has been introduced to exempt the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation from a requirement to remit one percent of its budget to the Office of the Public Auditor.

The proposed legislation says the required contribution to OPA is an additional cost that is ultimately passed on to the customers, including the government itself. Removing the requirement will lessen CUC's cost and help make power services more affordable to the customers.

Representatives David Apatang and Stanley T. Torres, who sponsored the bill, also noted that the proposal would not jeopardize OPA's ability to operate.

Last year, OPA reported a $1.5-million surplus. That amount is also being eyed for reappropriation to the financially troubled utility.

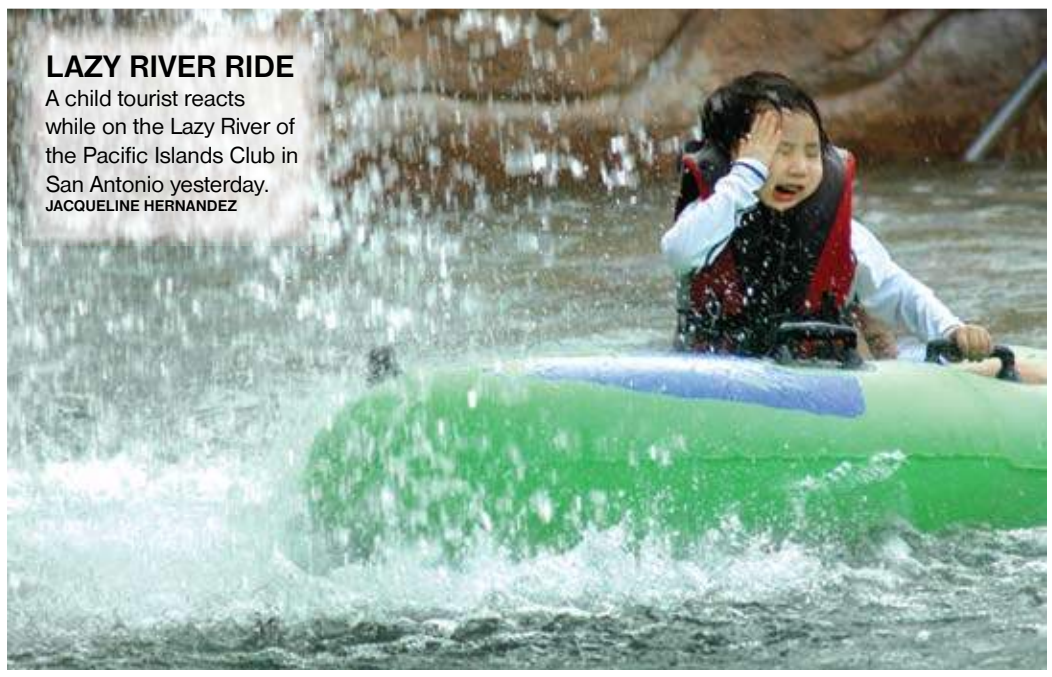
CUC is proposing a budget of $117.37 million for fiscal year 2008. One percent of this is $1.17 million.

CUC's proposed budget is $14.5 million more than the utility's projected revenue, which is $102.86 million.

The revenue projection is based on recently enacted law eliminating the monthly customer charge and reducing power rates for residential customers. It also takes into account emergency regulations that allowed for adjustments to the fuel component of power rates.

Power revenues is anticipated to total $95.3 million. This includes CUC's nearly 40,000 commercial customers, 9,750 government customers, and 143,200 residential customers. Combined, CUC's annual usage of 312 gigawatt annually. Monthly customer charges are expected to reach $883,000. The non-fuel component of power rates will bring in $20 million for CUC, while the fuel component will total $74.4 million.

The power revenue, combined revenue projections for water ($8.9 million) and sewer ($1.8 million), will total $106 million. This, minus some $3.1 million bad debts, will result in $102.9 million projected revenues. ***(Agnes E. Donato)***



**LAZY RIVER RIDE**
A child tourist reacts while on the Lazy River of the Pacific Islands Club in San Antonio yesterday.
JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

## Saipan Rotary celebrates 40 years

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN
rianne_pangelinan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Rotary Club of Saipan celebrated the 40th anniversary of its chartering at the Hibiscus Hall, Fiesta Resort and Spa Saipan Saturday evening.

The club observed this event by recognizing the past presidents, charter members, honorary Rotarians, citizens of the year, and other awards.

Rotarians of the club also had a chance to "reminisce" about what the club was like in their time and some notable accomplishments of their administrations.

Over a hundred people in the audience that attended the event, enjoyed their dinners while they were entertained by Saipan Southern High Band, the Friends of Arts, and the Island Believers dance group.

*MP Magazine* Edwin Propst was sworn in as Rotary's newest member. With this, he has pledged to help carry out the many projects of the Rotary Club to make the community, the country, and the world a better place to live.

Propst said that when he did some research on the Rotary he was very impressed about what it stood for.

"I embrace the philosophy behind it and very proud to become a member," said Propst.

Club president Patrick Calvo said that, the Rotary is not a charitable organization yet its activities exemplify the charities and sacrifices that one should expect from people who believe that they have the responsibility to help others."

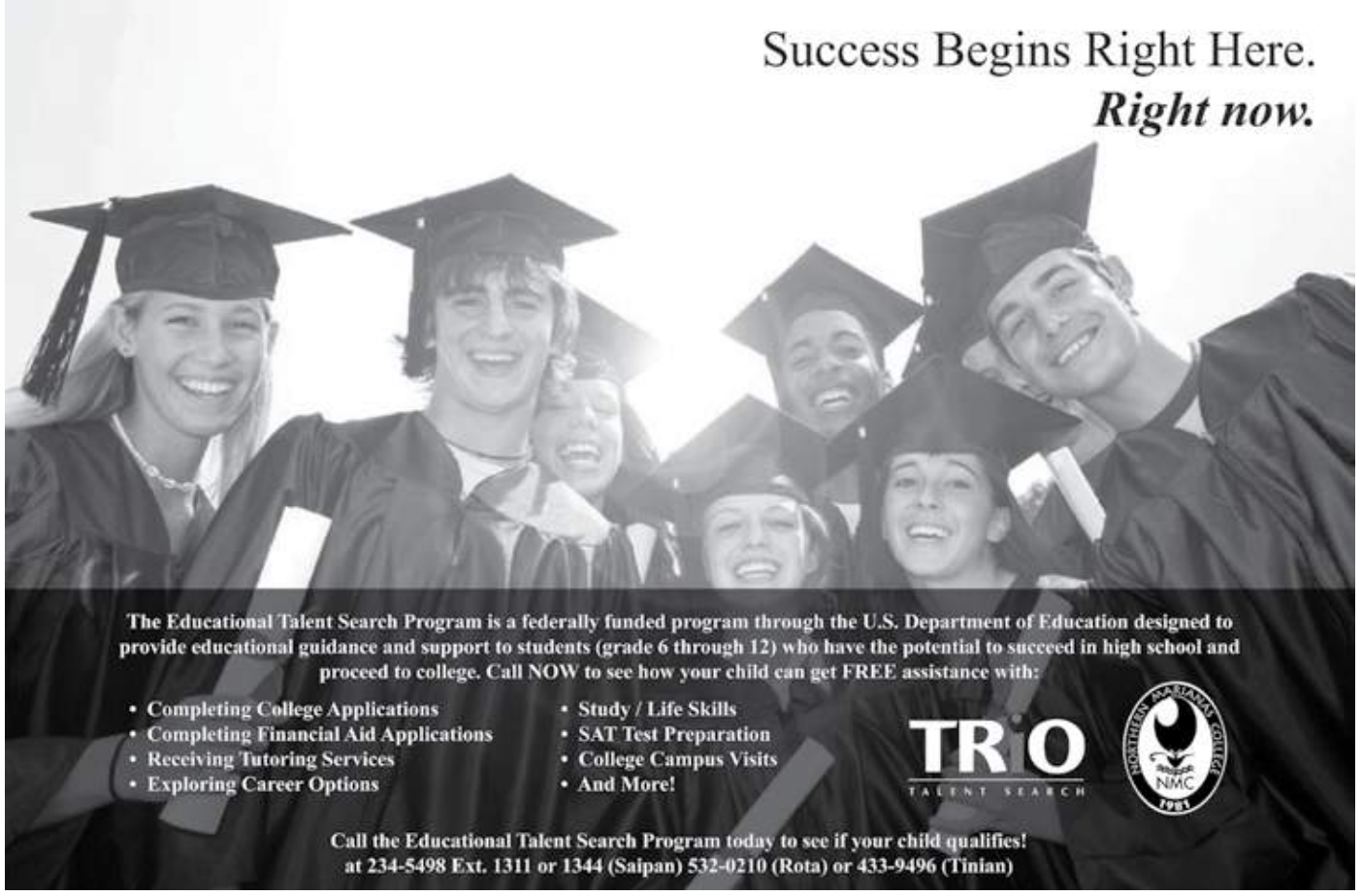
The event recognized the members who have been in the club for 10 years and over. David M. Sablan and Pedro Igitol both served in the Rotary Club the longest at 40 years respectively.

The signing of the friendship agreement with the sister-club Wakayamanaka topped the evening.

The endorsements of its members and president of the club Siro Saika reaffirmed its continued support and friendship with the Rotary of Saipan.

The Rotary Club of Saipan was founded in February 1966 with David M Sablan as its president. The only other founding member to still participate in the weekly meetings is Pedro JL Igitol.

Rotary is a worldwide organization of business and professional leaders that provides humanitarian service, encourages high ethical standards in all vocations, and helps build goodwill and peace in the world. Approximately 1.2 million Rotarians belong to more than 32,000 clubs in more than 200 countries and geographical areas.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# Police director sues DPS, officers over 2006 arrest

The Department of Public Safety's police director Aniceto Ogumoro has filed a lawsuit in federal court over his alleged unlawful arrest in 2006.

Ogumoro sued DPS, former acting DPS commissioner Juan Wabol, Maj. Edward Manalili, police officers Chris Guerrero, James Guerrero, Jessie Seman, and 20 unnamed co-defendants.

Ogumoro, through counsel Viola Alepuyo, cited 13 causes of action in filing the lawsuit Friday in the U.S. District Court for the NMI.

The police director asked the court to order the defendants to pay him damages. He demanded jury trial.

Ogumoro was the acting police director in February 2006 when police officers arrested him after they raided his house where they reportedly recovered three rifles and 25 boxes of ammunition.

The Attorney General's Office charged him with two counts of unlawful possession of a firearm, one count of possession of a weapon without proper registration, and one count of unlawful possession of ammunition. He pleaded not guilty.

On March 29, 2006, Superior Court associate judge Kenneth Govendo orally granted Ogumoro's motion and suppressed all evidence seized at the raid at the defendant's house in Capital Hill.

The AGO, through Chief Prosecutor Jeffery Warfield Sr., appealed to the CNMI Supreme Court the Govendo ruling.

Ogumoro, through attorneys James N. Camacho (now congressman) and Viola Alepuyo, argued that the AGO's appeal from Govendo's decision that suppressed all the evidence seized during the raid at his house was untimely and therefore should be dismissed.

Warfield then responded that Ogumoro's argument that the appeal should be dismissed based on an untimely filing "is without merit and borders on being frivolous."

But on Dec. 1, 2006, Warfield changed his mind. He moved to dismiss with finality the case against Ogumoro.

He also filed a separate motion to dismiss the government's appeal in the CNMI Supreme Court related to the same case.

Warfield explained that after review of the file and based upon Govendo's granting of Ogumoro's motion to suppress, the government is not convinced that sufficient evidence exists to prove the charges set forth in the case beyond a reasonable doubt.

Jeffery Warfield's wife, attorney Rebecca Warfield, subsequently became DPS commissioner.

With the dismissal of the case, Ogumoro was later on reinstated and named police director. Warfield also removed Manalili as chief of the DPS Criminal Investigation Bureau. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

**TINIAN INVESTOR** JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Bridge Investment Group LLC, vice president CNMI operations Phillip Mendiola-Long and The Fang Group managing director Erik F. Wang talk to the media during Tuesday's press conference at the Fiesta Resort and Spa Saipan in Garapan.

# OSHA cites Saipan-based company for willful scaffold and fall hazards

Musung Corp., a construction company based in Garapan, on the west coast of Saipan, which is one of the Northern Mariana Islands and part of the United States Commonwealth, faces $59,400 in proposed penalties from OSHA for alleged safety violations at the Ace Plaza commercial building construction site in Garapan. The agency cited the company for an alleged willful violation following a planned inspection at the worksite on Aug. 27, 2007, and assessed a proposed penalty of $42,000 for failing to provide fall protection for employees working on scaffolds 15 feet above the ground.

OSHA cited the construction company seven times between 2001 and 2005 for violations of the fall protection standards. "Musung's safety history and the facts surrounding the current inspection indicate that the employer willfully violated fall protection regulations," said Teresa Harrison, OSHA's acting regional administrator in San Francisco. "These violations had the potential of resulting in the death or serious injury of one or more of the company's employees."

The agency also cited the company for four alleged serious violations and proposed a $4,200 penalty for failing to fully plank scaffold platforms to prevent falls; a $4,200 penalty for failure to provide fall protection training; a $4,200 penalty for failing to provide ladders extending three feet above the upper landing level; and a $4,200 penalty for permitting employees to use ladders while carrying objects or loads that could cause them to lose their balance and fall. Additionally, OSHA cited Musung with one other-than-serious violation, assessing a $600 proposed penalty, for failing to maintain required employee injury and illness records. ***(OSHA)***

## 2005 arrest warrant to alleged overstaying cook served only last week

An Immigration officer served on Thursday in Chalan Kanoa an arrest warrant that was issued in 2005 against an alleged over-staying houseworker/cook in Rota.

Arrested was Marcela P. Lovidad, 54, a Filipino. The Superior Court has asked her to explain to the court why she should not be deported.

Immigration inspector Colin R. Sablan stated in his report filed in 2005 that on Dec. 13, 2005, he was to execute an arrest warrant for an alien worker, but instead saw Lovidad who fits the profile of the person subject for the arrest.

Sablan said Lovidad failed to provide any proof of identification.

The inspector said he requested the respondent to appear at the Immigration Office on Dec. 14, 2005, for further review.

He said Lovidad failed to appear at the Immigration the next day.

Sablan said the respondent was issued a nonresident work permit on Dec. 7, 2004, that expired on Aug. 4, 2005.

He said Lovidad has no pending Labor case and has failed to file an alien registration application.

Sablan said he also verified with Rota Immigration Maj. Abraham Ogo, who confirmed that the respondent has no pending application for transfer or renewal.

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PTI would like to remind its customers that payments not received by close of business on February 20th, will result in temporary suspension of all telephone services after 6:00 p.m. on that day. To prevent temporary suspension, customers must pay their bills on or before February 20th.
THIS WILL BE THE ONLY NOTIFICATION PTI CUSTOMERS WILL RECEIVE*.
Per an earlier announcement, PTI is no longer mailing out past due notices as of 11/01/06.
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# Background checks topic in SHRM meeting

The Society for Human Resource Management is pleased to have David J. Burger of Chimera LLC speaking on background checks during its luncheon meeting set for this Thursday, Feb. 21, at Hyatt Regency Saipan's Giovanni's Restaurant.

Burger will provide insight on the importance of conducting background checks. As human resource professionals, the importance of screening potential employees is vital and often something that is often ignored or performed way too late in the hiring process.

Burger has vast experience in public accounting. He was a former partner of KPMG Peat Marwick Accounting Firm, one of the largest accounting firms in the world and currently owns his own accounting firm with offices in Guam and Saipan.

All SHRM members are urged to join their peers for this current and informative discussion. Non-members, in the business community, whether owners, managers or human resource professionals, are invited to learn more about the society and to improve their human resource knowledge through this meeting.

The CNMI Chapter of the Society of Human Resource Management is the Commonwealth's foremost professional forum for discussion and training in human resource matters.

Recognized as a Superior Merit Chapter, the CNMI branch is composed of human resource professionals from a variety of industries, large and small, who recognize a need for a local society for professionals in the human resource field. The CNMI chapter is affiliated with the national organization.

The chapter meeting will be held at Giovanni's Restaurant at the Hyatt Regency Saipan on Thursday, Feb. 21, 2008. Doors open at 11:15am. for registration. Presentation will begin at 11:45am. Cost for SHRM members is $15 and for non-SHRM members is $20. Lunch is included. Reservations are required: Individuals interested in attending this meeting should contact Denise Montenegro at 323-5866 or fax 233-0182, Polly Dl Guerrero at email, pdlguerrero@mymarianas.com or Frannie T. Salas at francestsalas@gmail.com. ***(SHRM)***

# Fiji high chief warns against taking native land

**SUVA, Fiji** (Fijilive)—A high chief has warned that the latest development by Fiji's interim regime to de-reserve native land will be a 'catastrophic mistake.'

The proposed de-reservation of native land, which comprises almost 90 percent of the Fiji land mass, is one of the major recommendations in the report by a India-based consultant to the Sugar Minister Mahendra Chaudhry last November.

The interim government is considering the proposal in order to revamp the ailing sugar industry.

Nadroga chief Na Ka Levu, Ratu Sakiusa Makutu said Fiji has found itself thrust in the middle of a very traumatic period that is not only bringing the country to its knees, but tearing it apart.

"Among the long list of interim blunders, this development regarding de-reservation of native land will be a catastrophic mistake. I would suggest a great degree of caution," he told Fijilive.

He said when the GCC was dismissed, most of the chiefs chose to remain silent and this should be an indicator of the sensitivity of this issue and the strength of their resolve.

Ratu Sakiusa cited a quote from the book '20th Century Fiji' where Stewart Firth wrote, "Men Charles Salvage, David Whippy and Charles Pickering had no desire to convert Fijian, or to change them, or to take charge. They wish to live here, and this meant that they must fit in with the way Fijians did things, speaking the language, obeying Fijian chiefs and accepting the political dominance of the people whose country it is".

He added that like those early Europeans we ask the same of everyone now, "that they adapt to Fiji rather than asking that Fiji adapt to them."

**HEALTHY HEART WALK** JACQUELINE HERNANDEZ

Saipan International School students, parents, and teachers walk and run along the pathway from Minachom Atdao pavilion near Kilili Beach down to the Quartermaster intersection on Beach Road Thursday as they observe their 12th Annual Healthy Heart Walk. Over 200 participated on the event, which aims to promote physical activity and heart-healthy living in a fun family environment.

## BUSH

*From Page 1*

review this year, and Bush is trying to double its size—from the commitment of $15 billion already spent to $30 billion to be spent over the next five years.

"We don't want people guessing on the continent of Africa whether the generosity of the American people will continue," Bush said in this seacoast city in Tanzania.

Before a news conference, Bush signed a nearly $700 million aid pact to help Tanzania build up its infrastructure. The president of Tanzania praised Bush for his support fighting AIDS and malaria in his country.

Bush, nearing the end of a presidency dominated by the war in Iraq, is targeting disease and poverty in his visits to five African nations. The president and first lady, Laura Bush, began their African trip in Benin in West Africa, then flew to the east coast of the continent to Tanzania. He also plans to visit Rwanda, Ghana and Liberia.

Unlike in the United States, where his approval rating hovers near his record lows, Bush is treated here with reverence. A crowd of people, some wearing clothing bearing Bush's image, waved tiny U.S. and Tanzanian flags as the president and Tanzanian President Jakaya Kikwete walked down a red carpet into the State House in Dar es Salaam.

At the news conference, both leaders dodged a question about the presidential race in the United States and the candidacy of Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill., whose father was Kenyan. Obama's grandmother, Sarah Hussein, is following election results at her home in Kogelo, Kenya, none too bothered that her grandson is neck-and-neck with his chief rival, Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton of New York.

Bush, momentarily taken aback by a question about the excitement surrounding Obama's candidacy, said: "Seems like there was a lot of excitement for me."

Kikwete would say only: "Let him be as good a friend of Africa as President Bush has been."

Bush started his statement at the news conference with a folksy "Howdy" in Swahili.

He praised the Tanzanian leader and said he was happy to sign the pact.

"I'll just put it bluntly, America doesn't want to spend money on people who steal the money from the people," Bush said. "We like dealing with honest people, and compassionate people. We want our money to go to help human condition and to lift human lives as well as fighting corruption in marketplace economies."

## CUC

*From Page 1*

vices and reducing the disconnection fee to $60 from the $75 that had been in effect since 1996.

Under the legislation, CUC is required to offset a consumer's past due amount with the security deposit. CUC is also prohibited from disconnecting any service before the disconnection date, and from disconnecting all utility services if the consumer is only delinquent in the payment of one service.

Furthermore, the legislation prohibits CUC from cutting off service to a consumer who is receiving subsidy from the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs if DCCA is delayed in remitting the funds.

In vetoing the bill, the governor said the $75 reconnection fee was already below actual costs of mailing notices, administrative review to ensure no improper disconnections, the act of going to the property for the disconnection, then returning for the reconnection.

He added that the bill's findings regarding CUC's disconnection practices were incorrect. He said CUC does not disconnect without giving proper notice to customers and does not disconnect low-income families for untimely payments by the government.

## ATALIG

*From Page 1*

order in the Malite case.

Atalig said Govendo, however, "made the original order unreviewable."

"The court is a court of record. For the court to make a record unreviewable creates a lot of suspension. Why the court is destroying a record?" Atalig said.

The lawyer said the judge issued an amended order in the Malite case pertaining to his (Atalig) and Yana's suspension from practicing law.

"For an amended order to exist there has to be an original order. The fact that they destroyed the original order is a violation of the record keeping," Atalig pointed out.

He said the Supreme Court ordered Govendo to produce that original order because he and Yana need to see what is in that order.

With respect to Govendo's order for the removal of Jesus C. Tudela as administrator of Angel Malite estate, Atalig said they are also appealing that.

"The removal of Tudela is a complete attack on the Malite family by the court. And the court is not supposed to attack. The court is supposed to render justice," he pointed out.

Atalig said since Govendo took over the Malite proceeding, the judge has been attacking the case all in support of the Malite heirs' counsel Stephen Nutting's position.

"That seems to be the trend all the time," he said.

Atalig said Tudela's participation in the case began in 1968 and that because of his perseverance it resulted to over $3 million settlement.

The lawyer said with Govendo's recent participation in this case, the judge removed Tudela because of an Obyan property that is part of the settlement.

"The removal is really a total disruption and the attack on the Malite family. So we are appealing that because we totally consider that as wrong," he added.

Earlier, Atalig said Nutting's motion to disqualify chief justice Miguel S. Demapan from their appeal "is a cheap shot" and "an attack on the integrity of the judiciary."

Atalig said Nutting, whom he called a "loose canon" deserves severe sanction from the CNMI Supreme Court for filing that motion.

In the amended order issued by the Superior Court, Govendo found Atalig and Yana in contempt of court and suspended them from practicing law for failing to return to the court the $1.3 million in attorney's fees that had been awarded them in the Malite probate.

Govendo also kicked out Tudela as the estate administrator for mismanagement.

Yana and Atalig appealed to the Supreme Court.

The high court stopped the suspension of Yana and Atalig and set an oral argument on March 11, 2008. The order was issued by Demapan and associate justices Alexandro C. Castro and John A. Manglona.

The heirs through Nutting moved to intervene into the high court proceeding. They also requested for the disqualification of chief justice Demapan from the proceeding.

Nutting cited that chief justice Demapan should be disqualified because his brother, Roman Demapan, received $200,000 from the $1.3 million in attorney's fees in the Malite probate.

Nutting asserted that the Commonwealth law prohibits any judge from handling a case in which any person with which he has "second degree of relationship" has "an interest that could be substantially affected by the outcome of the proceeding."

He also cited that Atalig is chief justice Demapan's former law partner.

# COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
# DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
# DIVISION OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARING

Second Floor, Afetna Square Building, San Antonio, P.O. Box 10007, Saipan MP 96950

# NOTICES FROM THE LABOR DEPARTMENT

**LABOR DEPARTMENT NOTICES WILL BE PRINTED IN THE NEWSPAPERS AND POSTED ON MONDAYS. ANYONE WITH PENDING MATTERS BEFORE THE LABOR DEPARTMENT SHOULD BE SURE TO CHECK THE NEWSPAPERS ON MONDAYS. ALL CURRENT NOTICES WILL BE POSTED AT THE LABOR DEPARTMENT, SECOND FLOOR, AFETNA SQUARE BUILDING, SAN ANTONIO. REPRESENTATIVES, TRANSLATORS, AND PARTIES WITH PENDING MATTERS BEFORE THE LABOR DEPARTMENT WHO DO NOT USE NEWSPAPERS SHOULD BE SURE TO CHECK THE BULLETIN BOARDS AT THE LABOR DEPARTMENT.**

* * *

**ANYONE WITH QUESTIONS ABOUT THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR'S NEW WEBSITE, www.marianaslabor.net MAY CONTACT webmaster@marianaslabor.net. Use of the website is free.**

# NOTICE OF HEARINGS
# PENDING LABOR CASES

## Monday, Feb. 11, 2008 first notice
## Monday, Feb. 18 second notice

Notice is hereby given to the persons listed below to appear at the Hearing Office, Department of Labor, Second Floor, Afetna Square Building, San Antonio, on the date and at the time listed below. Your claims will be heard at that time or continued to a date certain. Please bring any documentation necessary to the resolution of your claims or defenses to claims against you. If you fail to appear, or fail to bring documentation, your claims or defenses may be dismissed, and an administrative order may be entered against you.

**THESE HEARINGS ARE FOR THE PURPOSE OF CLARIFYING DEPARTMENT RECORDS WITH RESPECT TO PENDING CLAIMS. If your claims have been heard, settled, or withdrawn, or you do not wish to pursue your claim, you do not need to appear for the hearings on the schedule below.**

If your case has already been resolved through a hearing on an individual labor case, the order in that case is binding and there will be no different resolution through the hearing listed below case. If your case has been resolved through a settlement, or you are a claimant and wish to withdraw your claims, please call Jeffrey Camacho, Investigator, 236-0960, or come to the Enforcement Office at the Department of Labor.

**THIS NOTICE IS POSTED AT THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR.**

| Case Number | Employee | Employer | Hearing Date | Time |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 05-085 | Abella, Adelaida D. | Juan T. Guerrero & Assoc. | Mar. 07, 2008 | 9:00 a.m |
| 98-101-04 | Alam, Md. Monzurul | Nelia D. Lozano dba Seiko Employment Services | Mar. 10, 2008 | 11:00 a.m. |
| 05-034 | Ali, Agzar | Aguon, Jose C. dba Payogo Asi Charcoal | Mar. 06, 2008 | 9:00 a.m. |
| 05-061 | Anbedor, Renaluz L. | Sako Corporation | Mar. 07, 2008 | 12:00 p.m. |
| 05-112 | Aquino, Lucila G. | Reyes, Ruth P. dba L Vira Fashion | Mar. 07, 2008 | 11:00 a.m. |
| 05-268 | Bai, Yu | Winner's Corporation | Mar. 10, 2008 | 10:00 a.m. |
| 05-261 | Bai, Zhe | Yun's Corporation | Mar. 10, 2008 | 10:00 a.m. |
| 05-054 | Baldo, Jenny G. | Jin Ah Corp. dba Dandan Golf Driving Range | Mar. 07, 2008 | 9:00 a.m |
| 98-101-04 | Bhuiyan, Md. Nasrul H. | Nelia D. Lozano dba Seiko Employment Services | Mar. 10, 2008 | 11:00 a.m. |
| 05-061 | Cado, Marlene V. | Sako Corporation | Mar. 07, 2008 | 12:00 p.m. |
| 05-076 | Cai, Lian | Marianas Fashion, Inc. | Mar. 07, 2008 | 10:00 a.m. |
| 05-321 | Cao, Jun Xian | Winner's Corporation | Mar. 10, 2008 | 10:00 a.m. |
| 05-104 | Chai, Bing Xiu | L and T Int'l. Corp. | Mar. 07, 2008 | 9:00 a.m |
| 05-384 | Changwei, Hu | Dai Development Corp. | Mar. 06, 2008 | 11:00 a.m. |
| 05-275 | Chen, Chunmei | Jin Apparel Inc. | Mar. 07, 2008 | 9:00 a.m |
| 05-139 | Chen, Feifei | Dela Rosa, William | Mar. 06, 2008 | 11:00 a.m. |
| 05-171 | Chen, Gang | BQF Services Inc. | Mar. 06, 2008 | 10:00 a.m. |
| 05-304 | Chen, Huadong | Aloha Corporation | Mar. 06, 2008 | 9:00 a.m. |
| 05-148 | Chen, Jinkun | United Int'l Corp. | Mar. 10, 2008 | 9:00 a.m. |
| 05-275 | Chen, Meijun | Jin Apparel Inc. | Mar. 07, 2008 | 9:00 a.m |
| 98-417 | Chen, Sanzhong | American Langente Corporation | Mar. 06, 2008 | 9:00 a.m. |
| 05-306 | Chen, Silong | United Int'l Corp. | Mar. 10, 2008 | 9:00 a.m. |
| 05-047 | Chen, Yueping | Far Ocean Corp. dba Diamond Karaoke | Mar. 06, 2008 | 11:00 a.m. |
| 05-315 | Chen, Zhongye | Li's Corp. | Mar. 07, 2008 | 9:00 a.m |
| 05-354 | Chunya, Lin | Rifu Apparel, Inc. | Mar. 07, 2008 | 11:00 a.m. |
| 05-061 | Dela Cruz, Dionesia S. | Sako Corporation | Mar. 07, 2008 | 12:00 p.m. |
| 05-049 | Estoque, Rodrigo P. | Aquino Printing Co. dba Express Printing | Mar. 06, 2008 | 9:00 a.m. |
| 05-317 | Gao, Yanying | Sako Corporation | Mar. 07, 2008 | 12:00 p.m. |
| 05-274 | Gonzales, Baby B. | Reyes, Joaquin T. | Mar. 07, 2008 | 11:00 a.m. |
| 05-352 | Guintu, Ramon F. | Sakisat, Raymond H. | Mar. 07, 2008 | 12:00 p.m. |
| 05-345 | Guo, Xiuping | Greate Corporation | Mar. 06, 2008 | 12:00 p.m. |
| 05-317 | Han, Fang | Sako Corporation | Mar. 07, 2008 | 12:00 p.m. |
| 05-058 | He, Deina | Winner's Corporation | Mar. 10, 2008 | 10:00 a.m. |
| 05-143 | He, Tong Bo | US CNMI- Dev. Corp. | Mar. 10, 2008 | 10:00 a.m. |
| 05-249 | He, Zheng Xia | Zhang's Corporation | Mar. 10, 2008 | 10:00 a.m. |
| 98-101-04 | Hossain, Alam | Nelia D. Lozano dba Seiko Employment Services | Mar. 10, 2008 | 11:00 a.m. |
| 98-101-04 | Hossain, Alamgir | Nelia D. Lozano dba Seiko Employment Services | Mar. 10, 20088 | 11:00 a.m. |
| 05-186 | Huang, Li | Concorde Garment MFG Corp. | Mar. 06, 2008 | 10:00 a.m. |
| 05-069 | Huang, Rumei | Liya Import and Export Corp. | Mar. 07, 2008 | 9:00 a.m |
| 05-150 | Huang, Suping | Concorde Garment MFG Corp. | Mar. 06, 2008 | 10:00 a.m. |
| 98-101-04 | Huo, Kazi A. | Nelia D. Lozano dba Seiko Employment Services | Mar. 10, 2008 | 11:00 a.m. |
| 05-031 | Islam, Md. Siful | Micro Pacific, Inc. | Mar. 07, 2008 | 10:00 a.m. |
| 03-032-05 | Islam, Shafiquoul | Sako Corporation | Mar. 07, 2008 | 12:00 p.m. |
| 05-317 | Jia, Yun Hong | Sako Corporation | Mar. 07, 2008 | 12:00 p.m. |
| 05-401 | Jiang, Deke | Yodan Ent. Inc. | Mar. 10, 2008 | 10:00 a.m. |
| 05-022 | Jiang, Hua Ying | Asia Pacific Overseas, Ltd. | Mar. 06, 2008 | 9:00 a.m. |
| 05-166 | Jiang, Lirong | New Echo Ent. Corp. | Mar. 07, 2008 | 11:00 a.m. |
| 05-376 | Jiang, Wenqing | Micro Pacific Inc. | Mar. 07, 2008 | 10:00 a.m. |
| 05-288 | Jin, Jingji | Hyunjin Saipan Inc. | Mar. 06, 2008 | 12:00 p.m. |
| 05-289 | Jin, Ri | Park's Professional Corp. | Mar. 07, 2008 | 11:00 a.m. |
| 05-051 | Ju, Dong Mei | Rifu Apparel, Inc. | Mar. 07, 2008 | 11:00 a.m. |
| 05-399 | Kairos Ent. Inc. | Kairos Ent. Inc. | Mar. 07, 2008 | 9:00 a.m |
| 05-103 | Kang, Aihong | United Int'l Corp. | Mar. 10, 2008 | 9:00 a.m. |
| 05-317 | Leng, Wen Xia | Sako Corporation | Mar. 07, 2008 | 12:00 p.m. |
| 05-278 | Li, Bohu | Aldan, Vicente M. | Mar. 06, 2008 | 9:00 a.m. |
| 05-125 | Li, Chang Gui | Everbright Company Ltd. | Mar. 06, 2008 | 11:00 a.m. |
| 05-278 | Li, Guangzhao | Aldan, Vicente M. | Mar. 06, 2008 | 9:00 a.m. |
| 05-394 | Li, Hongxia | Greate Corporation | Mar. 06, 2008 | 12:00 p.m. |
| 05-055 | Li, Jidi | Far Ocean Corp. | Mar. 06, 2008 | 11:00 a.m. |
| 05-356 | Li, Minglong | Aldan, Vicente M. | Mar. 06, 2008 | 9:00 a.m. |
| 05-327 | Li, Ping | Greate Corporation | Mar. 06, 2008 | 12:00 p.m. |
| 05-108 | Li, Qiaofeng | Aldan, Vicente M. | Mar. 06, 2008 | 9:00 a.m. |
| 05-353 | Li, Yanling | BQF Services Inc. | Mar. 06, 2008 | 10:00 a.m. |
| 05-246 | Li, Yun Qiang | Hopewell Corporation | Mar. 06, 2008 | 12:00 p.m. |
| 05-336 | Li, Zhen | Dafa Corporation | Mar. 06, 2008 | 11:00 a.m. |
| 05-156 | Liang, Fushi | Winners II Corp. | Mar. 10, 2008 | 10:00 a.m. |
| 05-209 | Liang, Jie | Aguon, Rainaldo C. | Mar. 06, 2008 | 9:00 a.m. |
| 05-301 | Lin, Fen Juan | Rifu Apparel, Inc. | Mar. 07, 2008 | 11:00 a.m. |
| 05-177 | Lin, Hong Mei | I&J Corp. | Mar. 07, 2008 | 9:00 a.m. |
| 05-387 | Lin, Hui | Concorde Garment MFG Corp. | Mar. 06, 2008 | 10:00 a.m. |
| 05-137 | Lin, Xiao Feng | Dong Hao Piao & Josephine Dela Cruz | Mar. 06, 2008 | 11:00 a.m. |
| 05-179 | Liu, Renqing | BQF Services Inc. | Mar. 06, 2008 | 10:00 a.m. |
| 05-182 | Liu, Wen Xiang | BQF Services Inc. | Mar. 06, 20088 | 10:00 a.m. |
| 05-216 | Lua, Vivian E. | Sheu's Brothers Holding Co., Ltd. | Mar. 10, 2008 | 9:00 a.m. |
| 05-398 | Luo, Guorong | Sun Mei Corp. | Mar. 10, 2008 | 9:00 a.m. |

| Case Number | Employee | Employer | Hearing Date | Time |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 05-190 | Ma, Hongrong | US CNMI- Dev. Corp. | Mar. 10, 2008 | 10:00 a.m. |
| 98-101-04 | Miah, Md. Alam | Nelia D. Lozano dba Seiko Employment Services | Mar. 10, 2008 | 11:00 a.m. |
| 05-368 | Micronesian Brokers Inc. (ER) | Doila, Maria M. (EE) | Mar. 06, 2008 | 11:00 a.m. |
| 05-299 | Mo, Guiying | Winner's Corporation | Mar. 10, 2008 | 10:00 a.m. |
| 05-042 | Ou, Chunming | Marianas Fashion, Inc. | Mar. 07, 2008 | 10:00 a.m. |
| 05-061 | Pangilinan, Federico P. | Sako Corporation | Mar. 07, 2008 | 12:00 p.m. |
| 05-336 | Peng, Shue Xiong | Dafa Corporation | Mar. 06, 2008 | 11:00 a.m. |
| 05-172 | Qian, Guoqiang | United Int'l Corp. | Mar. 10, 2008 | 9:00 a.m. |
| 05-240 | Qian, Meiling | Song Yong Jun Dba Banana Karaoke Bar | Mar. 10, 2008 | 9:00 a.m. |
| 05-350 | Qian, Xiaoli | Grace Int'l Inc. | Mar. 06, 2008 | 12:00 p.m. |
| 05-339 | Qiao, Liyan | Marianas Garment MFG Inc. | Mar. 07, 2008 | 10:00 a.m. |
| 05-056 | Qin, Ai Rong | Far Ocean Corp. dba Diamond Karaoke | Mar. 06, 2008 | 11:00 a.m. |
| 05-317 | Qu, Zhi Yun | Sako Corporation | Mar. 07, 2008 | 12:00 p.m. |
| 05-178 | Quan, Yu | Top Fashion Corp. | Mar. 10, 2008 | 9:00 a.m. |
| 98-101-04 | Rahim, Md. Abdur | Nelia D. Lozano dba Seiko Employment Services | Mar. 10, 2008 | 11:00 a.m. |
| 98-101-04 | Rahman, Latifur | Nelia D. Lozano dba Seiko Employment Services | Mar. 10, 2008 | 11:00 a.m. |
| 98-101-04 | Ranjit | Nelia D. Lozano dba Seiko Employment Services | Mar. 10, 2008 | 11:00 a.m. |
| 98-101-04 | Rashid, Harun Ur | Nelia D. Lozano dba Seiko Employment Services | Mar. 10, 2008 | 11:00 a.m. |
| 98-101-04 | Sen, Prabir | Nelia D. Lozano dba Seiko Employment Services | Mar. 10, 2008 | 11:00 a.m. |
| 05-200 | Shen, Hua Feng | Angel Wings Inc. | Mar. 06, 2008 | 9:00 a.m. |
| 05-253 | Song, Xiaowei | Top Fashion Inc. | Mar. 10, 2008 | 9:00 a.m. |
| 05-137 | Song, Zhiqing | Dong Hao Piao & Josephine Dela Cruz | Mar. 06, 2008 | 11:00 a.m. |
| 05-409 | Su, Yufang | Aldan, Vicente M. | Mar. 06, 2008 | 9:00 a.m. |
| 98-101-04 | Taher, Md Abu | Nelia D. Lozano dba Seiko Employment Services | Mar. 10, 20088 | 11:00 a.m. |
| 05-405 | Tao, Chonghua | Concorde Garment MFG Corp. | Mar. 06, 2008 | 10:00 a.m. |
| 05-061 | Taraya, Rosalinda R. | Sako Corporation | Mar. 07, 2008 | 12:00 p.m. |
| 05-317 | Tong, Yu Xui | Sako Corporation | Mar. 07, 2008 | 12:00 p.m. |
| 98-101-04 | Uddin, Md. Giash | Nelia D. Lozano dba Seiko Employment Services | Mar. 10, 2008 | 11:00 a.m. |
| 98-101-04 | Uddin, Mohammed S. | Nelia D. Lozano dba Seiko Employment Services | Mar. 10, 2008 | 11:00 a.m. |
| 98-101-04 | Ullah, Md. Shafi | Nelia D. Lozano dba Seiko Employment Services | Mar. 10, 2008 | 11:00 a.m. |
| 05-283 | Wang, Chun Hui | BQF Services Inc. | Mar. 06, 2008 | 10:00 a.m. |
| 05-132 | Wang, Chun Yan | Joo Ang Apparel Inc. | Mar. 07, 2008 | 9:00 a.m |
| 05-308 | Wang, Hongzheng | United Int'l Corp. | Mar. 10, 2008 | 9:00 a.m. |
| 05-228 | Wang, Xiao Wei | Hyunjin Saipan Inc. | Mar. 06, 2008 | 12:00 p.m. |
| 03-080-10 | Wang, Yan | Hip Shing (Saipan), Inc. | Mar. 06, 2008 | 12:00 p.m. |
| 05-404 | Wu, Xiaowen | Mirage Saipan Company, Ltd. | Mar. 07, 2008 | 10:00 a.m. |
| 05-180 | Wu, Xie Yan | US CNMI- Dev. Corp. | Mar. 10, 2008 | 10:00 a.m. |
| 05-193 | Wu, Zhangxia | Rifu Apparel, Inc. | Mar. 07, 2008 | 11:00 a.m. |
| 05-244 | Wu, Zhen Ming | Chen's Corporation | Mar. 06, 2008 | 10:00 a.m. |
| 05-379 | Xie, Guang Qing | Concorde Garment MFG Corp. | Mar. 06, 2008 | 10:00 a.m. |
| 05-360 | Xie, Meiqiong | Aloha Corporation | Mar. 06, 2008 | 9:00 a.m. |
| 04-035-07 | Xu, Jin | American Langente Corp. dba Tom's Tofu MFG | Mar. 06, 2008 | 9:00 a.m. |
| 05-098 | Xu, Rong Fang | RR Corporation | Mar. 07, 2008 | 12:00 p.m. |
| 05-232 | Xu, Shu Jian | Jin Apparel Inc. | Mar. 07, 2008 | 9:00 a.m |
| 03-119 | Xu, Yanhong | Marianas Garment MFG, Inc. | Mar. 07, 2008 | 10:00 a.m. |
| 05-107 | Xu, Yi Ming | Rifu Apparel, Inc. | Mar. 07, 2008 | 11:00 a.m. |
| 05-050 | Yang, Bao Guo | United Int'l Corp. | Mar. 10, 2008 | 9:00 a.m. |
| 05-160 | Ye, Shui Yuan | New Times Inc. | Mar. 07, 2008 | 11:00 a.m. |
| 05-286 | Yin, Chunhua | Hyunjin Saipan Inc. | Mar. 06, 2008 | 12:00 p.m. |
| 05-146 | Yu, Shu Xia | Micro Pacific Inc. | Mar. 07, 2008 | 10:00 a.m. |
| 05-278 | Zeng, Guifang | Aldan, Vicente M. | Mar. 06, 2008 | 9:00 a.m. |
| 05-181 | Zeng, Yong Qing | BQF Services Inc. | Mar. 06, 2008 | 10:00 a.m. |
| 03-193 | Zhang, Dao Chang | Nick's & Michael's Corp. | Mar. 07, 2008 | 11:00 a.m. |
| 05-097 | Zhang, Fukui | Sako Corporation | Mar. 07, 2008 | 12:00 p.m. |
| 05-030 | Zhang, Kunnian | Mirage Saipan Company, Ltd. | Mar. 07, 2008 | 10:00 a.m. |
| 04-552 | Zhang, Lin | Concorde Garment MFG Corp. | Mar. 06, 2008 | 10:00 a.m. |
| 05-091 | Zhang, Mingxia | Rifu Apparel, Inc. | Mar. 07, 2008 | 11:00 a.m. |
| 05-131 | Zhang, Xuehua | Top Fashion Corp. | Mar. 10, 2008 | 9:00 a.m. |
| 05-361 | Zhang, Yumei | Saipan Fashion Comp. | Mar. 07, 2008 | 12:00 p.m. |
| 05-236 | Zhao, Chun | US CNMI Dev. Corp. | Mar. 10, 20088 | 10:00 a.m. |
| 05-380 | Zhao, Weiwei | Concorde Garment MFG Corp. | Mar. 06, 2008 | 10:00 a.m. |
| 05-270 | Zheng, Jincan | Blue Pattern Corp | Mar. 06, 2008 | 9:00 a.m. |
| 05-211 | Zheng, Jinshu | United Int'l Corp. | Mar. 10, 2008 | 9:00 a.m. |
| 98-417 | Zheng, Jintai | American Langente Corporation | Mar. 06, 2008 | 9:00 a.m. |
| 05-110 | Zhong, Qin | Rifu Apparel, Inc. | Mar. 07, 2008 | 11:00 a.m. |
| 05-082 | Zhou, Hailan | United Int'l Corp. | Mar. 10, 2008 | 9:00 a.m. |
| 05-309 | Zhou, Qingchuan | United Int'l Corp. | Mar. 10, 2008 | 9:00 a.m. |
| 05-138 | Zhou, Yan | Concorde Garment MFG Corp. | Mar. 06, 2008 | 10:00 a.m. |
| 05-363 | Zhu, Aiqin | United Int'l Corp. | Mar. 10, 2008 | 9:00 a.m. |
| 05-003 | Zhu, Huihu | Mirage Saipan Company, Ltd. | Mar. 07, 2008 | 10:00 a.m. |
| 05-093 | Zhu, Liang Qiu | Michigan, Inc. | Mar. 07, 2008 | 10:00 a.m. |

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
State Board of Education
Public School System
P.O. Box 501370, Saipan, MP 96950

## INVITATION FOR BID
## IFB 08-017

The Public School System and the CNMI State Board of Education are soliciting competitive sealed bids for the C**onstruction of a Concrete One Story Building for the San Antonio Head Start Center**. Detailed information on the Scope of Work is available at the PSS Procurement & Supply Office located on the 3rd floor of the NMI Retirement Fund Building, Capitol Hill, Saipan, MP 96950.

All bids shall be in a sealed envelope face marked "IFB 08-017" containing (1) original and three (3) copies and submitted to the PSS Procurement and Supply Office no later than March 11, 2008 at 11:00 a.m. Responsibility Determination documents shall be placed in a separate envelope marked "IFB 08-017, CONFIDENTIAL - Responsibility Determination" (1-original and one copy). Any bid after the aforementioned date and time will not be accepted under any circumstance.

A pre-bid conference will be held at the PSS Conference Room, 3rd Floor NMI Retirement Fund Building, on February 26, 2008 at 10:00 a.m. Pre-Bid Conference Schedule is subject to change.

Technical questions shall be in writing and addressed to Mr. Carl Dela Cruz, Acting Procurement & Supply Officer, via fax # (670) 664-3791. Alternatively, questions may be e-mailed to the following address: delacruzc@pss.cnmi.mp.

Contractors are required to submit with their bid, a copy of their valid CNMI Business License.

The Public School System reserves the right to award single or multiple awards or to reject any or all bids, in whole or in part, if to do so is in the best interest of the Public School System.

All bids shall become the property of the Public School System.

**/S/ Dr. David M. Borja, D.B.A.**
**Commissioner of Education**

**/S/ Carl F. Dela Cruz, M.B.A.**
**Acting P & S Officer**

**Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands**
**State Board of Education**
## Public School System
P. O. Box 501370, Saipan, MP 96950

## Invitation For Bid
## IFB 08-023

The CNMI Public School System and the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation (NMHC) are soliciting competitive sealed bids for the **Construction of Building "J" to be located at Marianas High School, Saipan.**

Detailed information on the scope of work and specifications are available, for a fee, at Pacific Quick Print & Post located in Middle Road, Garapan, Saipan. **All interested bidders, prior to obtaining copies of the detailed information, shall register with the PSS Office of Procurement & Supply.**

All bids shall be in a sealed envelope face marked "IFB 08-023" containing (1) original and five (5) copies and submitted to the PSS Procurement and Supply Office no later than March 4, 2008 at 10:00 a.m. Responsibility Determination documents shall be placed in a separate envelope marked "IFB 08-023, CONFIDENTIAL - Responsibility Determination" (1-original and one copy). Any bid after the aforementioned date and time will not be accepted under any circumstance.

Bidders are advised that this project is subject to compliance with the Davis-Bacon Act and the labor standard provisions for wage rate determination of the Commonwealth. All labor on the project shall be paid no less than the minimum wage rate of $ 3.55 per hour which took effect on July 25, 2007 as established by Federal law including subsequent increases of $.50 per hour that is scheduled to take effect on May 26, 2008 and extending further, until the hourly rate equals that of the Federal Minimum Wage of $ 7.50 per hour.

Bidding procedures shall be in compliance with CNMI Public School System Procurement Regulations. Article 7, "Local Business Preference", as amended by Public Law 15-95 and as further amended by Public Law 15-118, is not available to local bidders in this procurement because its use is prohibited by the Federal law granting the funding for this project.

This project is funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), under its Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) provided to the Commonwealth. This project is also subject to Section 3 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1968 which requires recipients of HUD funds and the Contractors to help insure that the economic opportunities generated by these funds are provided to local low-income residents and the businesses that serve them "to the maximum extent feasible."

The CNMI Public School System hereby notifies bidders that it will affirmatively insure that in any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, women and small business enterprises will be afforded full opportunity to submit proposals and will not be discriminated against on grounds of race, color, national origin, political affiliation, creed, sex, religion, age, familial status, and disability status.

Pursuant to the Governor's Directive 251 dated March 15, 2006, bidders are required to include a Clearance from the Office of the Insurance Commissioner with respect to the financial bonding capability of the bidders' chosen Surety.

Performance time for completion of this project is One Hundred Sixty (160) Calendar days beginning with the date of Notice to Proceed. The Contractor shall pay to the CNMI Public School System the greater sum of **U.S. $100.00 per day (One Hundred Dollars), or 2% of the total contract price divided by the number of calendar days of the contract time**, not as a penalty, but as reasonable liquidated damages for failing, neglecting, or refusing to complete the work within the time herein specified, and said sums shall be paid for each consecutive calendar day that the Contractor shall be in default beyond the time stipulated for completing the work.

A pre-bid conference will be held at the PSS Conference Room, 3rd Floor NMI Retirement Fund Building, on February 22, 2008 at 10:00 a.m.

Technical questions shall be in writing and addressed to Mr. Carl Dela Cruz, Acting Procurement & Supply Officer, via fax # (670) 664-3791. Alternatively, questions may be e-mailed to the following address: **delacruzc@pss.cnmi.mp**.

The Public School System reserves the right to award single or multiple awards or to reject any or all bids, in whole or in part, if to do so is in the best interest of the Public School System.

All bids shall become the property of the CNMI Public School System.

**/S/ Dr. David M. Borja, D.B.A.**
**Commissioner of Education**

**/S/ Manuel A. Sablan**
**NMHC Board Chairman**

**/S/ Carl Dela Cruz, M.B.A.**
**Acting P&S Officer**

# Wiseman: PDO's disproportionate sentences argument has no merit

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Superior Court Associate Judge David A. Wiseman has ruled that the Public Defender's Office's argument that the sentencing orders in three criminal cases were disproportionate and has no legal or case authority to support it.

In denying PDO's motion for reduction of sentence on Simon Sebuu, Wiseman said there is not a single case cited in Sebuu's brief in support of any of his arguments.

The judge said Sebuu, through PDO, failed to present any valid reason to justify the court's exercise of discretion to reduce his sentence.

Wiseman said in the case of former Kagman High School principal Doreen M. Tudela, who embezzled $37,000 and received five months in jail, the sentencing was pursuant to a plea agreement and that there were mitigating circumstances in that case.

With respect to the four-day sentence imposed on a juvenile tagged as "mastermind" in the copper wire theft case in which Sebuu was involved, Wiseman said another judge sentenced the juvenile pursuant to a plea agreement.

"It is a basic principle of juvenile law that they are to be treated not as criminals, but as children in need of aid, encouragement, and guidance," he pointed out.

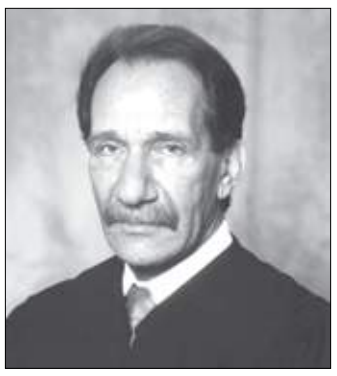
Sebuu was charged with burglary, theft, and criminal mischief for burglarizing the Little Angels Day Care in Koblerville.

In August 2007 the jury acquitted the defendant of burglary. But Wiseman found him guilty of theft and criminal mischief.

On Jan. 15, 2008, Wiseman sentenced the 23-year-old Sebuu to serve the maximum one year of the theft and the maximum one year for criminal mischief.

Assistant Public Defender Malik K. Edwards, counsel for Sebuu, moved to reduce the sentence.

Edwards asked why Tudela,


Wiseman

a former local principal who admitted stealing $37,000 from a school got five months in prison, but Sebuu, a Palauan man convicted of stealing a mere $24 worth of copper wire, received two years in prison.

Edwards noted that Wiseman made a reference to "precious children of this community" as part of his reasoning for imposing a two-year jail term on Sebuu.

But the lawyer cited that a few months ago, Wiseman did sentence Tudela who admitted to taking $37,000 from KHS, to five months imprisonment when she faced a maximum of 10 years.

Edwards also stated that, at the sentencing hearing, he pointed out that the admitted mastermind of this crime (minor A.A.) received a four-day sentence for his involvement in not only this theft, but also the theft of a car used in a poker robbery.

Edwards said he argued that Sebuu's sentence should be proportional to A.A.'s.

Edwards said Wiseman in rejecting his argument made a point to say that A.A. sentence was handed down by another judge.

In denying the motion, Wiseman said he considered all relevant factors in Sebuu's case and found absolutely no mitigating factors that would alter the court's sentence.

In Tudela's case, Wiseman said, the defendant repaid the entire amount she took prior to appearance in court, and that she fully cooperated with the government in its several other investigations into alleged corrupt practices within the Public School System and other government agencies.

Wiseman said in the cases of Tudela and the minor, unlike Sebuu, the defendants accepted responsibility for their wrongful actions and negotiated plea agreement wherein they agreed to cooperate with the government.

"Defendant Sebuu in this case, when offered the opportunity of allocution at sentencing, decided not to say anything. An allocution is more than an empty ritual, it represents a defendant's last opportunity to plead his case or express remorse," the judge pointed out.

On the minor's sentence, Wiseman said notwithstanding the public policy regarding the treatment of minors in the criminal justice system, the government negotiated a plea agreement in that case that led to the juvenile's cooperation, resulting in the filing of charges of at least three other persons.

Wiseman said pursuant to the plea agreement, the juvenile also has several other conditions to perform and comply with while on probation.

About PDO's assertion that the death of his father contributed to the cause of Sebuu's wrongdoing, the judge said such claim is not a factor of mitigation in this case.

Wiseman said the defendant used that event for obtaining a continuation of his sentencing and for not appearing for his rescheduled sentencing date.

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION
1211 CAPITOL HILL ROAD
P.O. BOX 5150, SAIPAN, MP 96950
TEL. NOS. (670) 322-4363/6954 • FAX NO. (670) 322-3327

## PUBLIC NOTICE

Pursuant to 1 CMC §8113, the Civil Service Commission hereby gives notice that the Board will meet on February 21, 2008 at 9:00 a.m. The meeting will be held at the Civil Service Commission Conference Room, 1211 Capitol Hill Road, Capitol Hill, Saipan. The agenda for the meeting is as follows:

**AGENDA**

1. **Call to Order**
2. **Roll Call**
3. **Seating of new Commission Members**
4. **Election of Officers**
5. **Adoption of Minutes**
6. **Executive Directors Report**
7. **Legal Counsel Report**
   a. P.L. No. 15-43 Boards and Commissions Reform Act of 2006
   b. Cases to be scheduled for hearing
8. **Old Business**
   a. Adoption of amendments to Personnel Service Rules and Regulations
9. **New Business**
   a. House Bill No. 15-122
   b. Renumbering of Personnel Service System Rules and Regulations
   c. P.L. No. 15-119
9. **Announcements**
10. **Adjourn**

Daniel N. Nielsen Felix R. Fitial Alicia T. Odoshi

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Saipan Tribune

# San Nicolas affirms disqualification of alien worker who paid $4K to get job

Department of Labor Secretary Gil M. San Nicolas has upheld the Labor Administrative Hearing Office's decision that permanently barred an alien worker who paid $4,000 to an unlicensed recruiter in China to get a job in the CNMI and was found to have entered into the Commonwealth through a fraudulent scheme.

San Nicolas said Shunpeng Chen's contention on appeal that his recruiting agent is responsible for any wrongdoing "hardly deems plausible as he remained idle for over two years with no attempts to rectify the wrongdoing."

"The fact that Mr. Chen was present in the Commonwealth for over two years prior to the labor hearing date proves that he is not needed for employment," said the secretary in affirming the order issued by then administrative hearing officer and now Labor director Barry Hirshbein.

According to Labor records, Chen filed his Labor case in Nov. 2005. He arrived in the CNMI on June 25, 2005 and alleged he was unable to find his employer, CP Central Pacific Corp.

Chen testified that when he arrived in the CNMI he stayed with a friend. He asked his friend to help find his employer.

In August 2005, Chen came to Labor and met with Tony Yen who helped him secure his entry permit.

Chen did not ask Yen to help find Central Pacific Corp. In November 2005 complainant again asked Yen for help and this Labor case was followed.

Chen testified he paid about RMB 30,000 ($4,000) in China to secure employment in the CNMI. He did not use a licensed recruiter.

The complainant did not make a copy of the documents that he signed. He testified that he worked as a technician in the Lin Xin Garment factory in China from 1998 to 2005. That was his only job.

Chen's nonresident worker affidavit, submitted in support of the employment application, states that he worked as a waiter from 2000 through 2004.

Complainant stated that the information is not true. He testified that he did not sign the affidavit. He also testified that the signature of the employment contract is not his.

In his order, Hirshbein revoked Chen's work/entry permit and ordered him to depart the CNMI within 15 days after a repatriation ticket is delivered to Labor.

Hirshbein permanently barred Chen from working in the CNMI as a nonresident worker.

The administrative hearing officer said Chen shall take nothing by his complaint against Central Pacific Corp.

Hirshbein, however, sanctioned Central Pacific Corp. to pay a $4,000 fine to the government and permanently barred the company from employing alien workers in the CNMI.

Chen appealed. He told San Nicolas that prior to his arrival in the CNMI, he was not aware or familiar with labor regulations and the processing procedure.

He claimed that all the documents for his employment application required Labor were asked by his recruiting agent.

Chen said the agent should be totally held responsible for any fraud document submitted to Labor.

In dismissing the appeal, San Nicolas said Chen's entry into the CNMI was clearly fraudulent.

San Nicolas said the nonresident worker affidavit signed and submitted to Labor states that Chen worked as a waiter from 2000 to 2004.

San Nicolas said Chen testified that that information is not true and that he did not sign that affidavit. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***

# … then remands labor case of worker who claims he wasn't notified about hearing date

Department of Labor Secretary Gil M. San Nicolas has returned to the Labor Administrative Hearing Office the complaint of an alien worker that he was denied due process when his labor case was dismissed.

San Nicolas said the case of Xeutian Gu against Jing Yang Corp. is remanded to the Administrative Hearing Office for findings on the allegation of the denial of procedural due process.

The secretary instructed the Hearing Office to make findings and either grant a new hearing or return the case to him for further attention on Gu's appeal.

Labor records show that Gu failed to appear at the hearing on Aug. 7, 2007.

On that day, then administrative hearing officer and now Labor director Barry Hirshbein issued a two-page order dismissing Gu's case.

Hirshbein said for failure to attend the hearing, Gu's complaint is deemed abandoned.

Hirshbein denied transfer and directed Go to leave the CNMI within 15 days of service of the order.

The worker appealed to San Nicolas.

In his letter, Gu said the Labor investigator and his translator did not notify him about the hearing.

"I totally didn't know when the hearing would be at all," he said in his letter to the secretary.

Gu appealed to the secretary to give him a chance to have a hearing because the company apparently owes him a lot of unpaid wages and didn't provide him work as well.

The worker said police detained him for 24 hours at the day of the hearing when he and his friends went to the translator's house to follow up his case.

He said the translator got mad at him and called the police for him to leave the house.

In remanding Gu's case, San Nicolas said if the complainant's allegation is not contradicted he may be entitled to relief. ***(Ferdie de la Torre)***


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**Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands**
**Office of the Secretary of Public Works**
2nd Floor Joeten Commercial Building, Gualo Rai
Saipan, MP 96950

## INVITATION FOR BIDS
**DPW08-IFB-017**

### RENOVATION OF GOVERNMENT HOUSE NO.1353 CIP OFFICE

Governor Benigno R. Fitial and Lt. Governor Timothy P. Villagomez, through the Department of public Works (DPW) are soliciting sealed bids for the Renovation of Government House No. 1353 CIP Office, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI).

The project package will be available on or after February 19, 2008 at DPW Technical Services Division, 2nd Floor-Commercial Building, Oleai Center, Saipan. A non-refundable payment of One Hundred Dollars **(US$100.00)** is required for each set. Payment must be made to the CNMI Treasurer and a receipt of payment must be presented when obtaining the Scope of Work at the DPW Technical Services Division. All interested bidders are also required to include Insurer Clearance Certification (ICC) in their bid packages in order to bid on this project. The ICC can be obtained at the Department of Commerce/Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC) on Capitol Hill.

Bidding procedures shall be in full compliance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations, dated May 24, 2001. **Preference is available to US Citizens as per Public Law 15-95 and as further amended by Public Laws 15-118 and must be submitted with the BID if preference is claimed.**

There will be a Pre-bid Conference for this project on March 7, 2008, 9:00 a.m. local time at the job site located at Capitol Hill. The Prospective bidders are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the site. All questions regarding this project must be submitted in writing no later than 4:30 p.m. local time on March 11, 2008 to **Mr. Joseph M. Inos Jr., Director** of Technical Services Division, DPW 2nd Floor Commercial Building, Oleai Center, Saipan or fax to (670) 234-3547.

Sealed bids must be marked "**DPW08-IFB17**". For bidders within the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be submitted to the Director of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, no later than 10:00 a.m. local time March 14, 2008. Bidders located outside of the CNMI may obtain an additional Seven (7) working days for receipt of their bids by submitting a Notice of Intent to bid. Notices of Intent to bid must be received by the Director of Procurement and Supply no later than 10-00 a.m. local time March 14, 2008, and must be transmitted via facsimile to (670) 664-1515, or via e-mail to procurement@pticom.com. For bidders located outside the CNMI, an original and two copies of sealed bids must be postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service or the official government postal service of a foreign country no later than March 14, 2008, and must be received no later than March 27, 2008. Note that failure to submit the required number of copies may be cause for rejection of a bid.

Bids will be publicly opened and read at the Division of Procurement and Supply, Lower Base, Saipan, at 10:00 a.m. local time, April 2, 2008, However, if no notices of intent to bid were received from bidders outside the CNMI, bids will be opened at 10:00 a.m. local time, on March 19,2008.

For bids greater than Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars ($25,000.00) a bid security of fifteen (15%) of the bid amount must accompany the bid. This security may be Certified Check, Cashier's Check or Bid Bond. Checks must be made payable to the CNMI Treasurer, with the name of the bidder and a notation on the face of the check. "Credit Account No. 44660".

The bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be subject to a responsibility determination in conformance with the CNMI Procurement Regulations Section 3-301. The responsible bidder submitting the lowest responsive bid will be awarded a contract with the CNMI Government and will be required to deliver Performance and Payment bonds, each equal to 100% of the contract price for contracts greater than $25,000.00. The surety company providing the Performance and payment bond must be authorized to conduct business in CNMI and possess unencumbered assets equal to the penal amount of cat each bond.

Performance time for completion of this project is Ninety (90) calendar days upon issuance of Notice to Proceed. Liquidated damages will be assessed at one hundred dollars (**US$100.00**) per calendar day for delays beyond the established completion date.

All bid documents received shall become the sole property of the CNMI Government. The Government reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to waive any imperfection in a bid proposal that does not effect the elements of price, quantity, and delivery of the bid, in the best interest of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

**/s/ JOSE S. DEMAPAN**
Secretary of Public Works

**/s/ VIRGINIA C. VILLAGOMEZ**
CIP Administrator

**/s/ HERMAN S. SABLAN**
Director of Procurement & Supply

## NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS COUNCIL FOR THE HUMANITIES

## BOARD VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

The board of directors for the Northern Mariana Islands Council for the Humanities (Council) wishes to announce two board vacancies. Applicants can be from Tinian, Rota and Saipan.

The Council's board comprises thirteen volunteer members who serve three year terms and can be renewed once only. The Council strives to maintain a board that reflects a broad cross section of our community. The ideal candidates will have a strong desire to promote the Council's mission, programs, and activities. Council members are expected to engage in creative development of programs; encourage regrant applicants and recipients on their programs; and be active in the Council activities as well as the administrative requirements. Council members are unlike the usual board membership in that they are often called upon to participate in programs; develop programs; and promote programs of the Council.

The Council is a non-profit private corporation affiliated with the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH). The Council's mission is to foster awareness, understanding and appreciation of the Humanities through support of educational programs that relate the humanities to the indigenous cultures and to the intellectual needs and interests of the people of the Commonwealth.

Board responsibilities include but are not limited to:

- Attending regular Council meetings four times annually.
- Attending periodic committee meetings.
- Evaluating Council programs and activities.
- Reviewing grant applications.
- Raising funds.
- Providing input from the community.
- Attending conferences, workshops and other meetings relating to the humanities.
- Willing to spend from 2-4 hours per month on Council activities, particularly as Chair of a committee.

Interested residents are invited to submit their letters of interest and resumes to **Herman T. Guerrero, Chair, Northern Mariana Islands Council for the Humanities, P.O. Box 506437 Saipan, MP 96950 or fax them to the Council at 235-4786**. Letters and resumes must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. on **March 26, 2008**. For additional information please contact the Council's Executive Director at telephone 235-4785 or visit the Council's website at http://nmi.humanities.org.

## A GLIMPSE OF THE PAST

*Looking back at the Mariana Islands the past 62 years*

PHOTO BY DMS

High school students at the Navy Dependent School. Many local children attended the only high school on Saipan. Miss Mary Bean is at the piano. The school was located at the same location where Fiesta Resort and Spa Saipan is today.

# LIHEAP program has 700 recipients

By RIANNE PANGELINAN-BROWN
rianne_pangelinan@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Department of Community & Cultural Affairs Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program currently has 700 clients prior to the implementation of the new power rate.

Although there are 700 recipients, there had actually been a 50-percent reduction due to eligibility requirement.

"Because the clienteles couldn't afford their share, they were removed from the program," said department deputy secretary Melvin L.O. Faisao.

The LIHEAP program requires that recipients must maintain their account with the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation at a zero balance or current.

In a letter dated Jan. 31, 2008, to Rep. Ray Yumul, Faisao stated that "With the emergency regulation in FY 2006, that reduced the benefit of the LIHEAP program by 50 percent, it showed that our clients have been burdened more with the current rate CUC imposed on us.

He added that the clients end up being disconnected as they cannot afford their share and its recipients have declined to 50 percent since they were forced to get out of the program.

The LIHEAP program provides power subsidy assistance to low-income families, elders, and disabled in accordance with eligibility as provided by the matrix system.

Faisao said "for point of clarification, the department position is that this program is not an overburden, but since the Legislature feels that it needs to explore the possibility of eliminating such burden the enabling legislation is Public Law 1-22."

One of LIHEAP's requirements is for every client to bring their current account or else they will lose their eligibility.

"Our suggestion is to bring back the old matrix system or to make a new regulation to coincide with the new CUC rate," said Faisao.

The old provision in the old matrix system waives the reconnection fee for recipients receiving assistance from LIHEAP.

Although the LIHEAP receives $200,000 annually, it only needs $180,000 to service its clients.

Faisao said about $18 million is needed to service the LIEHEAP reciepints annually. The program receives $200,000.

# RFPs for Lib Day activities sought

The 2008 Liberation Day Committee in close collaboration with the Office of the Mayor of Saipan would like to solicit proposals from qualified vendors for the operation of amusement rides during the 2008 Liberation Day Carnival festivity. Vendors must provide their own equipment for the operation. Carnival festivities shall commence on June 6 through July 6, 2008. Lowest proposal accepted shall not be less than $3,500. Only one vendor shall be selected to provide amusement rides during the festivity.

Qualified vendors must submit their proposal to the Chairman of the 2008 Liberation Day Committee, Mr. Manuel C. Tenorio, no later than 4:30pm on April 30, 2008. Selection shall be based on highest proposal received. Proposals submitted after the above-specified time and date shall not be accepted. For information and/or inquiries, you may contact the Chairman of the 2008 Liberation Day Committee at 287-8091.

The 2008 Liberation Day Committee in close collaboration with the Office of the Mayor of Saipan would like to solicit proposals from qualified vendors for the operation of game (gambling) concession during the 2008 Liberation Day Carnival festivity. Games shall be limited to table games only. Vendors must provide their own equipment for the operation. Carnival festivities shall commence on June 6 through July 6, 2008. Lowest proposal accepted shall not be less than $3,500. Only four vendors shall be selected to provide amusement rides during the festivity.

Qualified vendors must submit their proposal to the Chairman of the 2008 Liberation Day Committee, Mr. Manuel C. Tenorio, no later than 4:30pm on April 30, 2008. Selection shall be based on highest proposal received. Proposal submitted after the above-specified time and date shall not be accepted. For information and/or inquiries, you may contact the Chairman of the 2008 Liberation Day Committee at 287-8091.

The 2008 Liberation Day Committee in close collaboration with the Office of the Mayor of Saipan would like to solicit proposals from qualified vendors for the procurement of materials for the construction of the 2008 Liberation Day Carnival Concession Booths.

The materials are as follows:

| Lumber | Quantity |
|---|---|
| 2x2x20 | 30 pieces |
| 2x4x20 | 1,450 pieces |
| 2x6x20 | 40 pieces |

| Plyboards | |
|---|---|
| 4x8x3/8 | 380 pieces |
| 4x8x5/8 | 300 pieces |

Roofing Tin
Roofing Tin (12 ft.)
200 pieces
Roofing Tin (10 ft.)
200 pieces

**Nails**
Common 3 inches 9 boxes
Common 2 inches 4 boxes
Common 1 ½ inches 3 boxes
Roofing 3 inches 8 boxes

Qualified vendors must submit their proposal to the Chairman of the 2008 Liberation Day Committee, Mr. Manuel C. Tenorio, no later than 4:30pm, March 31, 2008. Selection shall be based on lower proposal received. Proposals submitted after the above-specified time and date shall not be accepted. Materials procured under this RFP must be available for delivery within 3 days of purchase. For information and/or inquiries, you may contact the Chairman of the 2008 Liberation Day Committee at 287-8091. ***(PR)***

## Flashback

### A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

**February 18, 2000**

**$12 million now in rebate trust fund**
All indications are pointing to the on-time release of tax rebate and refund checks this year with the government drawing near to fully replenishing the special rebate trust account, according to Finance Secretary Lucy Nielsen. Ms. Nielsen said the government has so far deposited at least $12 million in the special rebate trust account, which was almost empty when the administration of Gov. Pedro P. Tenorio assumed office in January 1998.

**CDA refutes OPA report on building renovation**
Contrary to a preliminary report prepared by the Public Auditor, monthly rental at the building currently occupied by the Commonwealth Development Authority in Gualo Rai will be in status quo until 2007, Board Chair John S. Tenorio said yesterday. Mr. Tenorio was reacting on a report from OPA which claimed that renovation of the structure along Middle Road will eventually increase CDA's monthly rental of the property by $5,000 to $19,212 per month.

**DOLI says more locals referred to private employers**
Despite the slowdown in the island's economy, the Department of Labor and Immigration has been able to reduce unemployment among local residents with the implementation of a new system in the agency. According to Alfred A. Pangelinan, director of Employment Services, registration in the job referral and placement program of DOLI shot up by 500 last year compared to 1998 with a total of 2,001 registered applicants.

**February 18, 2002**

**Garbage crisis looms**
The Department of Public Works is bracing for a looming garbage crisis due to the unavailability of financial assurance that would warrant the issuance of a permit to operate the Marpi landfill. This, as ongoing work for the landfill remains limited to clearing operations as the contractors await the release of a revised federal permit concerning native birds inhabiting the project site.

**Create new industry in NMI: Diego asks Chinese**
To create a climate that will promote business growth in the CNMI, the Babauta administration will end the politics of confrontation with the United States, make the CNMI investor-friendly and implement a performance-based government. At the same time, Lt. Gov. Diego T. Benavente challenged members of the Chinese Association of Saipan, CNMI to use their ingenuity to create alternative industries in the Commonwealth, in the wake of the impending demise of the garment industry.

**PSS sees $600K shortfall in FY02 personnel funds**
The Public School System gave Board of Education members last week a run-down of the public education sector's fiscal outlook, which, in part, forecasts a shortfall in personnel support if the current funding level for FY 2002 remains at $37.7 million. The personnel deficit is expected to reach $600,000, which covers current PSS full time equivalents, including new hires, according to acting PSS Fiscal and Budget Officer William Matson.

**February 18, 2003**

**House favors $25K bond**
Instead of imposing the $100,000-security deposit on long-term investors seeking to operate businesses on the CNMI, the House of Representatives supports scaling this requirement down to a $25,000-bond, in a bid to lure in new foreign capital. House members endorsed the move Friday based on a recommendation by the Committee on Commerce, which concluded that the high security deposit requirement is a deterrent to new and existing foreign investments in these difficult economic times.

**EMO eyes NMI citizens' corps**
Amid the heightened national alert against possible terrorist attacks, the Commonwealth would soon activate a citizens' corps trained in emergency response at the household level. Emergency Management Office deputy director Mark S. Pangelinan yesterday disclosed that the CNMI has received a grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency to conduct training for such a corps. The first training is being eyed in March.

Northern Mariana Islands
RETIREMENT FUND
*"Investing For The Future Financial Security Of Our Members"*

# RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS RETIREMENT FUND TO SUSPEND PROCESSING OF MEMBERS' BENEFITS BR08-001

**WHEREAS**, the Northern Mariana Islands Retirement Fund ("Retirement Fund") was statutorily created as a pension system to provide retirement security and other benefits to retired, qualified prior and present Northern Mariana Island Government ("Government") employees and their eligible dependents ("members");

**WHEREAS**, the Retirement Fund is to provide for an actuarially sound, locally funded pension system in accord with the constitutional provisions protecting members' rights;

**WHEREAS**, the Northern Mariana Island Constitution ("Constitution") protects the accrued benefits of the Retirement Fund's pension system from being diminished and/or impaired;

**WHEREAS**, the United States and Northern Mariana Islands Constitution prohibits the enactment of laws impairing the obligation of the contracts;

**WHEREAS**, there is a statutorily created contract between the Government and the Retirement Fund, for the purpose of providing a retirement or pension system for the intended, third party contractual beneficiaries -- i.e. members;

**WHEREAS**, the members have a membership in the Retirement Fund system that constitutes a contractual relationship between members and the Retirement Fund;

**WHEREAS**, the Government is required by law to provide employer contributions to the Retirement Fund set by a Retirement Fund approved actuary;

**WHEREAS**, the Retirement Fund has received less than its full share of contractually bargained for Employer's Contributions from the Government, on an intermittent and/or continuous basis since calendar year 2001;

**WHEREAS**, the Retirement Fund has received less than its full share of the purportedly budgeted amounts from the Government who failed to remit payment of the statutorily mandated thirty percent (30%) of the hotel occupancy taxes and twenty percent (20%) of the alcoholic container excise taxes collected to finance the members' Group Health and Life Insurance (GHLI) program and their Annual Cost of Living Allowance increases as well as to ensure the Fund's actuarial soundness since 1995;

**WHEREAS**, the failure of the Government since on or about January 13, 2006 to remit the bi-weekly payments of FIVE HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS ($500,000.00) toward reducing the arrearage of employer contributions owed to the Retirement Fund pursuant to a duly executed Memorandum of Agreement between the Government and the Retirement Fund;

**WHEREAS**, the Retirement Fund has received less than its full share of the past amounts necessary to provide for the Early Retirement Bonus;

**WHEREAS**, the Retirement Fund has received less than its full share of the Government's continued shortfall funding of the Special Benefit for Governors and Lieutenant Governors allotments for past or previous NMI Governors and Lt. Governors;

**WHEREAS**, the Government and the Legislature have gone to the extraordinary step of passing a law suspending the Government's Employer Contributions for FY 2006 and FY 2007;

**WHEREAS**, the Legislature overrode the Governor's veto and enacted Public Law 15-98, allowing Retirement Fund members with not more than 15 years of service to withdraw their contribution to the Fund with interest;

**WHEREAS**, the enactment of Public Law 15-98 will force the Retirement Fund to liquidate investments in order to meet the cash demands necessary to comply with the law;

**WHEREAS**, the Retirement Fund has already fallen below a level of forty percent (40%) total funded accrued actuarial liability of the total obligation of the Fund within the last five (5) years, is currently only forty-six percent (46%) funded, and has consistently failed to reach a level of fifty percent (50%) total funded accrued actuarial liability of the total obligation of the Fund since fiscal year 2000;

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Trustees of the Retirement Fund are the governing body responsible for the direction and operation of the affairs and business of the Retirement Fund;

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Trustees of the Retirement Fund has a fiduciary duty to protect and prudently invest the assets of the Retirement Fund for the members' benefit; and

**WHEREAS**, the Board of Trustees has been for years gravely concerned that the Retirement Fund has been and is severely diminished and/or impaired by the acts or omissions of the Government and the Legislature;

**BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED**, that the Retirement Fund Board of Trustees, in upholding their fiduciary duty of protecting the Retirement Fund's assets for the members' benefits, intends to direct the Retirement Fund to immediately suspend processing all applications for retirement or any other benefits of any Retirement Fund member with deficient employer contribution; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that a copy of this Resolution will be distributed to all Government agencies, the Legislature, the Judiciary and all branches, departments, agencies, instrumentalities, public corporations, municipalities, political subdivisions and the Office of the Washington Representative.

The undersigned duly appointed and authorized representatives of the Retirement Fund, a Public, autonomous agency duly formed pursuant to the laws of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands hereby certify that the foregoing is an officially sanctioned resolution duly adopted at a meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Retirement Fund, held in accordance with NMI laws and procedures on November 20, 2007, and that said resolution is now in full force and effect.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, We have executed our names as members of the NMI Retirement Fund Board of Trustees and have hereunto affixed the corporate seal of the NMI Retirement Fund this 20th day of November 2007.

**Juan T. Guerrero, Chairman**

**Bernadita C. Palacios, Member**

**Rose L. Igitol, Member**

**Pedro Q. Dela Cruz, Member**

**Oscar C. Camacho, Vice Chair**

**Juan SN Lizama, Member**

**Bertha C. Leon Guerrero**

# Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
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**Jayvee L. Vallejera** EDITOR
**Mark Rabago** ASSISTANT EDITOR

MEMBER
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## EDITORIAL

## Obama's waffle

As recently as November, Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill., was unequivocal about whether he would agree to take public financing for the general election if his Republican opponent pledged to do the same. "If you are nominated for president in 2008 and your major opponents agree to forgo private funding in the general election campaign, will you participate in the presidential public financing system?" the Midwest Democracy Network asked in a questionnaire. Obama's answer was clear. "Yes," he wrote. "If I am the Democratic nominee, I will aggressively pursue an agreement with the Republican nominee to preserve a publicly financed general election."

Or maybe not. Obama deserves credit for obtaining a ruling from the Federal Election Commission that allowed him to raise money for the general election campaign but reserve the right to return the funds if he were to win the nomination and manage to arrange a cease-fire with the other side. That outcome, once improbable, is now within reach. The presumptive Republican nominee, Sen. John McCain of Arizona, agreed long ago to Obama's deal, back when his prospects for securing the nomination seemed slim. McCain's campaign manager, Rick Davis, recently reaffirmed that pledge at a lunch with reporters sponsored by the Christian Science Monitor.

But Obama's campaign, which has been raking in money at an astonishing clip of more than $30 million a month, is starting to hedge. Speaking to the Associated Press, Obama's spokesman, Bill Burton, downgraded the Obama plan to "something that we pursued with the FEC and it was an option that we wanted on the table and is on the table." Asked about the campaign's earlier position, Burton said, "No, there is no pledge."

It must be tempting for a campaign that has reached dizzying new financial heights to give up the guarantee of $85 million in federal funds for the prospect of being able to rake in even more — and to get a financial edge over an opponent whose fundraising has been lackluster and whose party seems dispirited. It must be chastening to think about the financial advantage that McCain will have in the months leading up to the convention, when Obama and Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton of New York, his remaining Democratic opponent, may still be battling for the nomination while McCain is spending "primary" money to build the necessary architecture for the general election.

But this kind of backtracking and parsing isn't what the millions of voters who have been inspired by Obama are looking for. It's not befitting Obama's well-earned image as a champion of reform. Instead of waffling, Obama should be pushing Clinton to accept public financing.

Why not let the candidates raise as much cash as they can and save the taxpayers' money? Because it's better for voters if candidates spend more time talking to them and less time cozying up to donors. It's better for democracy if candidates are less indebted to big bundlers who have raked in six- or seven-figure amounts for their campaigns. McCain seems to understand this. What about the Democrats?

(c) 2008, The Washington Post

## Robbed by our fellow citizens Part I

**By ANTHONY PELLEGRINO**
Special to the Saipan Tribune

*Pellegrino is a longtime businessman in the CNMI and is the former president of the Saipan Chamber of Commerce.*

If tomorrow's newspaper headline were to scream out: WE ARE BEING ROBBED BY OUR FELLOW CITIZENS! What would you think? Would you get angry and want to know who is doing this? Or would you do as Pontius Pilate did, turn away and wash your hands feeling that it is not my problem? Would you turn to the sports page and pretend that everything is ok? Would you feel betrayed by the government for letting this happen? Would you be outraged?

In the year 2000, Leo LaMotte, the former Public Auditor, is quoted as saying:

"The level of corruption in the Northern Marianas is quite intolerable… and should be addressed immediately."

Mr. LaMotte, lamented that the audit reports and investigations his office, the OPA, investigated in recent years were proof of the existence of widespread corruption in the Commonwealth government.

What Mr. LaMotte spoke about in 2000, is again being loudly repeated eight year later by our current OPA chief Mike Sablan. In a summary on the "Status of Audit Recommendations" as of June 30, 2007, and followed up by an "Executive Summary" dated Dec. 28, 2007, nothing is being done to punish the people who have committed these crimes against us. These criminals have walked away with millions of dollars free. And the worst of all is that the government knows who these people are. No one seems to care. No one wants to chase after them. Why not?

To read these reports and others punch in CNMI Office of the Public Auditor on your computer or call the OPA's office.

Corruption is the most shocking crime committed against people because it is a betrayal of trust. We put our faith and belief in someone or in a group who we feel will help improve the community. Instead that individual or group betrays us by taking advantage of our trust and faith in them. Short of murder, I cannot think of a more criminal act. And that trust is being broken by our own citizens, not foreigners.

Several times over the years I have spoken to the FBI about corruption here and have asked them why they haven't gotten more involved in stopping it. Their reply is, "Yes, we know who is doing what and how much is being creamed off the top or simply stolen, but we cannot find any witnesses who will stand up in court and testify against the offenders. They all refuse for various reasons."

What a sad commentary on us to know that a crime has been committed and no one is willing to come forth to aid justice and his fellow citizens. By our cowardliness we are admitting that we condone these acts of corruption. In simple language, we are as guilty as the corruptors and as evil as they are for tolerating them. The courts call it accessory to a crime. Are we such a sick society?

Why do we tolerate parasites in our community to feed off us without becoming disgusted and crushing them? Do we deny that we don't know who these bloodsucking leeches are? Where are the good and fearless leaders we elected? Since they refuse to do anything about the corruptors why do we keep re-electing them when they tolerate these scoundrels? Or are they part of the corruption also? Maybe it's time to kick them all out and start over again.

Where is the integrity that is supposed to be the basic moral fiber of man? Integrity is an abstract word difficult to define but easy to recognize when practiced. A person with integrity knows what is right or wrong even if no one else wants to admit it. A person of integrity is one who adheres to a code of values, utter sincerity, honesty, and candor regardless the price.

Integrity requires three steps:

1) revealing insight and understanding of what is right and wrong;

2) acting on what we know even at personal cost; and

3) saying openly that we are acting on our understanding of right and wrong.

We must show our children the importance of integrity versus corruption. Children must see us practicing what we truly believe, not what we mouth off. If we want the CNMI to be strong, our children must learn that only an honest society can prosper. To do less is to corrupt them also.

We have a vigilant OPA which the government has effectively defanged and de-clawed rendering it weaker and sillier than a pussy cat. I don't envy Mike Sablan's position. He and his staff are snowed under with hundreds of requests for audits. Then when the audits are completed, the government and its various agencies do nothing to rectify the wrongs revealed in the audits. They are either whitewashed or simply ignored. If no one will listen and correct the injustices against its citizens, why have such an agency? It becomes a wasteful and futile agency. It makes all of us look stupid.

The irony of all this is that the more thorough a job the OPA does the more complains the director receives about how overpaid he is. Meanwhile we all forget that the OPA is one of the few truly independent watchdogs and seriously concerned about keeping our government and community clean and honest.

Corruption is the getting away with things we know to be wrong. Corruption is corrosive—little by little our values and principals of life erode until only the shell of a man is left. The rest has been eaten away by parasites and maggots. We have sold our souls and our fellow citizens for a few lousy dollars. As T.S. Elliot, the poet, put it: "We are the hollow men."

There are four roads that lead to corruption:

1) self-interest—things that we want regardless of right or wrong, we want them;

2) self-protection—things that we don't want, regardless of right or wrong, we will do anything to avoid them;

3) self-deception—a refusal to see a situation clearly, our view is the correct one;

4) self—righteousness—the end justifies the means attitude, the path of all tyrants.

What most of us forget is that every time anyone commits an act of corruption, he or she is stealing from our children and us. Should we allow people that steal from our children to remain free? Why do

*See ROBBED on Next Page*

**EDITORIAL POLICY** The *Saipan Tribune* welcomes comments on any article, column, editorial, or topic that may be of interest to the public. Letters to the editor must include the name, address, and contact number of the contributor. Letters that are critical in nature should focus on issues, not personalities. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, CIC Centre, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

## Letters to the Editor

# Knowledge is power (Part II)

Right after I published my letter to the editor entitled "Knowledge is Power," an anonymous Filipino guest worker together with his friends in the Philippines constructed a website and donated it for the use of all the guest workers in CNMI. On behalf of this generous group of people, I invite the guest workers to visit www.cg-workers.net. The forum has at least five very interesting categories (my favorite is HR 3079, of course). This website is linked to other informative websites such as Unheard No More, etc. I was browsing it for the first time today and I'm surprised to see exchanges of intellectual opinions and ideas already going on.

We envisioned the CNMI Guest Workers Forum as a means to reach out to all the guest workers in CNMI. This is not for Pinoys only. Anybody can participate either by posting a topic or commenting on a topic being posted. By sharing information, we learn and by learning, good judgment comes out. This forum also aims to help. I invite you to share your difficulties or problems. No promises but we will try our best to extend help in whatever small ways we can. Besides the more hands are involved, the lighter the burden becomes.

Trying times or not, I pray that we, the guest workers, remain unified so we can be stronger and our voice louder.

**Irene N. Tantiado**
*Capitol Hill, Saipan*

# NMC relies on a placement system, not a placement test

In a press release that led to articles in both local newspapers last week, Northern Marianas College defended its use of the Test of English as a Foreign Language to determine placement of incoming students in its English classes. While the press release provided an argument in defense of NMC's use of the test as well as explained the means for determining its validity, it fell somewhat short of a full explication on the topic. NMC students, their parents, and other stakeholders, including those who question the use of the test to deny the entry of local high graduates immediate entry into English 101 need, I think, a more comprehensive explanation regarding the means for determining what English courses students are advised to enroll in at NMC.

First off, NMC does not rely solely upon the use of a single test to determine English placement of its incoming students. If such were the case, criticism would certainly be warranted. Instead, the English program uses a multi-faceted comprehensive system for making that determination. Whether the entering student is one who has learned English as a foreign or a second language or is a native speaker of English is beside the point. The basic question is, "What English skills does the entering student need to acquire in order to be successful in content courses taught at the college level and to competently engage in learned discourse for personal or professional purposes?"

One also needs to be fully aware that the use of English is not at all a one-dimensional skill. What is so deceiving to those who lack training and education in the teaching of English language (as opposed to literature, which is the content of most high school English courses) is that there are two distinct uses of the language, and skill levels are distinctly different according to the use: one use is that of every day discourse to engage in social interchange, while the other is that used for academic purposes, primarily for reading and writing. It is the former, social discourse, in which our local students excel, and which unfortunately masks their competence in the use of reading and writing skills. Both the critics and the defenders of the NMC placement test, to this point, have failed to recognize how well our local high school graduates fare in terms of placement in the listening/speaking strand of NMC's English program. Unlike the students entering NMC from countries where English is not widely spoken, our local students almost never need to be placed in English courses designed to improve their English listening and speaking skills. (In the language of one of our local newspapers, almost no one "flunks.") And for those whom the placement system indicates a need to improve their English skill development prior to entry into English 101, a far greater percentage require writing skill development than require further work on their reading skills.

The placement system, it must be understood, is not designed to assign a single "score" relative to an entering student's English skill level. Rather, with the use of several assessment instruments, an entering student's proficiency level is determined relative to his/her listening/speaking skill, his/her ability to comprehend college level text books, and his/her ability to write formal discourse at a level required in college content courses. For these reasons, the instructors at NMC never speak of a student's passing or failing relative to their English course placement performance.

So what is the placement "system" used at NMC to determine assignment of English courses? The TOEFL—which assesses English language performance in listening, vocabulary, syntax (grammar), and reading—is one assessment instrument. Each student is also assessed in terms of writing performance. Students are given a period of time to write on a topic they choose from a provided list of topics (hardly a "foreign" language test). These writing samples are then read (with students' names removed from the writing samples) and assessed by three different English instructors, with total scores on the writing sample and the grammar score on the TOEFL used to determine placement in the writing strand of the NMC English program. In determining placement of a particular student, it is not uncommon to hear NMC's English instructors engage in discussion regarding proper placement of a student who appears to be borderline. Placement determination, however, does not end once the initial placement instruments are used. During the first week of instruction, English instructors use a variety of diagnostic tools (e.g., the reading subtest of the California Achievement Test, or CAT, series) to determine students' skill development needs. The results of these tests further indicate whether the student has been appropriately placed, and if such is not the case, the student may be moved to another level, almost always to a higher level.

Finally, it should be known that NMC is not unique in administering English and math placement tests to incoming students. Such is a standard practice at community colleges across the nation, including all colleges and universities within the University of Hawaii system, as well as at University of Guam and Guam Community College. And it is a well known fact that a large portion of graduating high school students across the nation are placed into developmental reading and writing courses prior to being admitted into a college-level freshman English course. On what basis can a claim be made that the CNMI is ahead of the entire nation in terms of high school student performance in English reading and writing? The results from the annually administered standardized tests to our high school students certainly don't support such a contention. On a side note, it's interesting that no one is concerned about the number of graduating high school students being placed into pre college-level math courses at NMC. It would be informative if the NMC were to release that type of data to the public.

Instead of hurling unwarranted criticism toward NMC at this crucial stage in its history, our community should be lauding the English Department at NMC for its adherence to the uncompromising and rigorous standards it has set for its English courses. Were the Department and College to succumb to community pressure to lower its standards, Guam and Hawaii postsecondary institutions would very quickly move to discontinue acceptance of English course credits from NMC. Mainland colleges and universities would shortly make the same move and WASC would have yet another reason for finding fault with the institution.

My personal actions, in addition to my analytical knowledge, attest to my conviction that the English program placement system at NMC is valid and reliable, for I relied upon it to determine English skill performance and subsequent English course placement of two of my children and a grandson. In all three cases, I found no reason to quibble with the results and placement determination. You see, my belief is that the purpose of attending college is for one to acquire knowledge and skills, not merely to accumulate credits. Being allowed to enter English 101 at NMC, or at any other higher education institution, without the requisite preparatory skills solely on the basis of being a native speaker of English would definitely be contrary to that belief.

**Ivan Propst**
*Susupe, Saipan*

# Planning and enforcement

I just recently received a copy of the *MP magazine* in which I read an account by Sam McPhetres of how we got into the difficulty in which we now find our Commonwealth. At the same time, I read from Tina Sablan about the difficulty foisted on the Legislature by an incomplete, late, budget submission from the Executive branch. Throughout Tina's open forums, the point that was mentioned repeatedly by the participants, was the difficulties caused by the failure of our government to enforce the laws that are already on the books. It is apparent that we don't need more new laws, but we simply need to enforce the laws we have.

There is a law which requires the executive branch of the government to submit a balanced budget for approval by the CNMI Legislature on a certain date each fiscal year. That law has been broken. Why is it important? Without a budget there can be no PLANNING.

If I drive over the speed limit and am apprehended by a policeman, I am given a ticket for a court appearance. If I am found guilty of this violation, I either go to jail or pay a fine. We all understand this.

If the executive branch of the CNMI government breaks the law by failing to submit a balanced budget proposal on time, where is the policeman? Who is the policeman? I guess that you and I, JOHN Q. PUBLIC, are the policemen in this case. How do we arrest the executive branch for its felony? I DON'T KNOW!

It seems obvious that JOHN Q. PUBLIC cannot simply rely on the electoral process to remedy this unlawful action by our executive branch. We are talking about PLANNING, here and now. Mr. McPhetres article identifies this problem as "P." "P" stands for PLANNING. This is what we expect of our elected government officials and has been sadly lacking.

I see that a special election is being suggested for April to address certain initiatives promulgated by Rep. Heinz Hofschneider. Planning and democracy in action, I like it!

I do not have the expertise to formulate the public initiative that I am about to suggest, but would be more than willing to devote all my time to acquiring the necessary signatures to have the idea put on the ballot for an upcoming election. April or later, I believe that we must make our elected officials accountable. Not only at election time, but here and now: when they have broken the law. ENFORCEMENT.

Here's my suggested initiative. "Elected officials and employees of elected officials not under the CNMI Civil Service Regulations, will not be paid if they do not properly perform their legally mandated fiduciary duties." For example, if the executive branch fails to submit the legally required balanced budget proposal in a timely manner, as required by law, each day late means that all the elected executive branch employees and their subordinates do not get paid. On the other hand, if a balanced budget proposal is provided by the executive branch, but is not acted upon by the CNMI Legislature in the required legally mandated time period, payment for all legislators and their employees will cease, until the proper action has been taken.

Is there a public spirited legal mind out there, who would be willing to spearhead this initiative? I believe that this is a way for JOHN Q. PUBLIC, to police the actions of our elected officials NOW!

I shake my head in dismay to think that such an initiative is needed, but I see no other way to get our elected officials to act responsibly and honorably.

**Roger N. Ludwick**
*Sadog Tasi*

## ROBBED

*From Page 10*

we allow these scumbags to remain free?

We must demand that the government expose these parasites and force them to make restitution. To do any less is to admit that all of us—the government and we—are a party to all the corruption and we condone it. Remaining silent is the same as knowingly allowing a thief to steal from us.

If I sound as a moralist, than so be it. We must stand up to the corrupt acts committed by our fellow citizens. If we are to perpetuate the good life that we envision for our family and children, we must bring the criminals to justice. Become incensed at this outrage of not chasing after the corruptors by the government! Speak up! Demand action! Expose the corruptors now!

Next week I will discuss some of the corrupt acts that have been committed but are not yet prosecuted by our government. You probably will recognize some of them. Can you imagine over $6,400,000.00 could be recovered and no one is taking action to go after it? Do have a nice day. At least the sun is shining.

Sattelite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

# The Weather

## 5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

| TODAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 10 to 15 mph. | Partly sunny with isolated showers. Northeast winds 15 to 20 mph. | Partly cloudy with isolated showers. | Partly cloudy with isolated showers. | Partly cloudy with isolated showers. |
| ▲81° ▼74° | ▲81° ▼75° | ▲81° ▼75° | ▲81° ▼75° | ▲82° ▼75° |

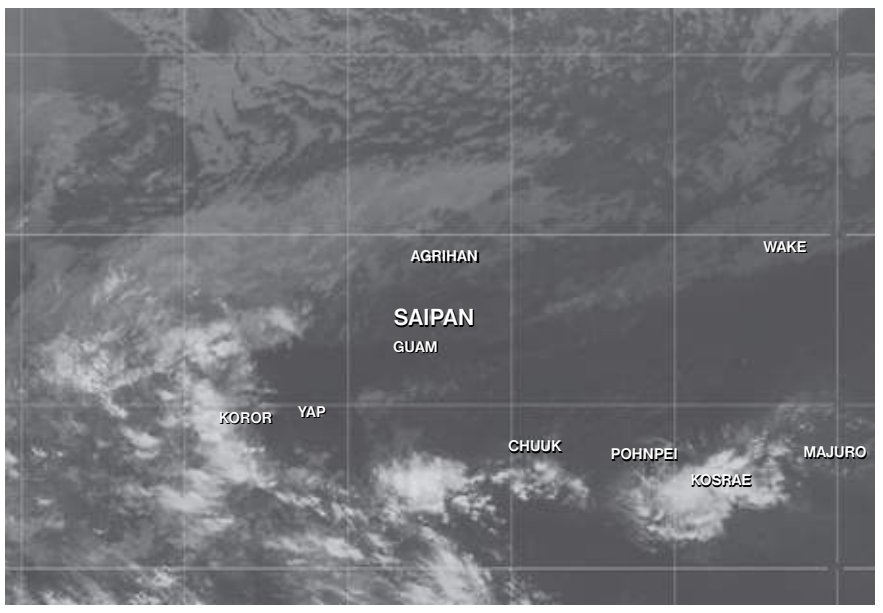
## Micronesia

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Guam and Rota | Partly Sunny | ▲83 | ▼75 |
| Palau | Cloudy | ▲88 | ▼77 |
| Yap | Partly Sunny | ▲86 | ▼77 |
| Chuuk | Cloudy | ▲87 | ▼76 |
| Pohnpei | Thundershowers | ▲84 | ▼74 |
| Kosrae | Partly Sunny | ▲87 | ▼76 |
| Majuro | Partly Sunny | ▲85 | ▼77 |

## Around The Globe

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Auckland | Mostly Sunny | ▲74 | ▼60 |
| Beijing | Cloudy | ▲40 | ▼27 |
| Hong Kong | Mostly Sunny | ▲66 | ▼57 |
| Honolulu | Mostly Sunny | ▲77 | ▼64 |
| London | Mostly Sunny | ▲55 | ▼35 |
| Los Angeles | Cloudy | ▲68 | ▼52 |
| Manila | Rain | ▲80 | ▼74 |
| Melbourne | Mostly Sunny | ▲88 | ▼72 |
| Miami | Thundershowers | ▲85 | ▼65 |
| New York | Showers | ▲56 | ▼34 |
| Osaka | Partly Sunny | ▲40 | ▼29 |
| Osaka | Partly Sunny | ▲40 | ▼29 |
| Pusan | Mostly Sunny | ▲49 | ▼28 |
| Rome | Sunny | ▲49 | ▼30 |
| Salem | Mostly Sunny | ▲55 | ▼38 |
| San Francisco | Mostly Cloudy | ▲58 | ▼47 |
| Seoul | Mostly Sunny | ▲34 | ▼15 |
| Tokyo | Sunny | ▲47 | ▼31 |
| Washington, DC | Mostly Cloudy | ▲60 | ▼34 |

## Yesterday's Satellite Image




**PICTURE TIME: 1:00AM, SUNDAY, FEB. 17, 2008**
Western North Pacific between Equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

An old cold front extends west-southwestward from 22N180 to near Wake island at 19N167E to 18N160E then continues as a shear line to Rota in the CNMI near 14N145E to beyond 130E at 11N. Extensive cloudiness and scattered showers are found along this boundary and northward to beyond 25n. A near-equatorial trough runs southeastward from 2N137E to end at EQ144E. Convergent winds east of the trough axis are producing scattered showers and a few thunderstorms south of Yap within 60 miles of a line from 3N142E to the equator at 147E. Trade-wind convergence is generating scattered showers and a few thunderstorms in two areas of Micronesia. The first is between 3N and 7N from 145E to 155E which is just south of Chuuk. The second is between 2N and 7N from 160E to 168E which includes Kosrae but is east of Pohnpei and south of Kwajalein.

## Tides

**Saipan Harbor**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 07:02AM Today | High Tide: | 1.8 Feet |
| 11:57AM Today | Low Tide: | 1.4 Feet |
| 04:38PM Today | High Tide: | 1.8 Feet |

## Sunrise/Sunset

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Today | 6:41AM | 6:22PM |
| Tuesday | 6:40AM | 6:22PM |
| Wednesday | 6:40AM | 6:22PM |
| Thursday | 6:39AM | 6:22PM |
| Friday | 6:39AM | 6:23PM |

## Moonrise/Moonset

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Today | 03:38PM | 04:09AM |
| Tuesday | 04:38PM | 05:01AM |
| Wednesday | 05:36PM | 05:48AM |
| Thursday | 06:30PM | 06:30AM |
| Friday | 07:21PM | 07:08AM |

## FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF FEBRUARY 15, 2008

### DEPARTURES

**Saipan-Rota**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| CO 9313 | 8:30am | 9:05am | 3,4,7 |

**Saipan-Guam**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| CO9317 | 5:00am | 5:50am | Daily |
| CO9597 | 8:30am | 9:20am | 1,2,5,6 |
| CO9313 | 8:30am | 10:00am | 3,4,7 via Rota |
| CO9601 | 12:30pm | 1:20pm | Daily |
| CO9603 | 3:30pm | 4:20pm | Daily |
| CO9605 | 6:30pm | 7:20pm | Daily |
| CO9599 | 9:30pm | 10:20pm | Daily |

**Saipan-Narita**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| NW 078 | 8:25am | 1:30pm | Daily via Nagoya |
| NW 075 | 4:50pm | 7:30pm | Daily |

**Saipan-Osaka**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| NW 083 | 4:30pm | 7:25pm | Daily |

**Saipan-Nagoya**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| NW 078 | 8:25am | 11:05am | Daily |

**Saipan-Manila**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| CO 895 | 4:45pm | 6:35pm | 6 |
| CO 895 | 6:45pm | 8:35pm | 3 |

**Saipan-Seoul**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| OZ 604 | 2:10am | 6:00am | 1 |
| OZ 604 | 2:40am | 6:30am | 2,3,4,5,6,7 |
| OZ 606 | 3:30pm | 7:00pm | 2,4,6,7 |

**Saipan-Busan**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| OZ 608 | 4:00am | 7:35am | 1,4,5,7 |

**Saipan-Guanzhou**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| CZ 3008 | 5:00am | 8:00am | 2,6 |

**Saipan-Shanghai**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| MU 590 | 4:20am | 7:00am | 2,6 |

**Guam-Manila**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| CO 891 | 6:00am | 10:30am | 3 via Yap and Koror |
| CO 893 | 6:30am | 8:05am | 6 |
| CO 893 | 8:25am | 10:00am | 2,7 |
| CO 893 | 5:50pm | 9:10pm | 5 via Koror |
| CO 933 | 8:00pm | 9:40pm | Daily |
| PR 111 | 6:00am | 7:45am | 1,2,4,6,7 |

**Guam-Hongkong**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| CO 909 | 7:45pm | 10:40pm | 1,5 |

**Guam-Rota**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| CO 9598 | 10:15am | 10:45am | 1,2,6 |

### ARRIVALS

**Rota-Saipan**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| CO 9598 | 11:10am | 11:45am | 1,2,6 |

**Guam-Saipan**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| CO 9316 | 2:30am | 3:20am | Daily |
| CO9596 | 7:00am | 7:50am | Daily |
| CO9598 | 10:15am | 11:45am | 1,2,6 via Rota |
| CO9600 | 10:45am | 11:35am | 3,4,5,7 |
| CO9602 | 2:00pm | 2:50pm | Daily |
| CO9604 | 5:00pm | 5:50pm | Daily |
| CO9606 | 8:00pm | 8:50pm | Daily |

**Narita-Saipan**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| NW 076 | 10:35am | 3:05pm | Daily |
| NW 077 | 6:15pm | 1:10am+1 | Daily via Nagoya |

**Osaka-Saipan**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| NW 084 | 10:40am | 3:10pm | Daily |

**Nagoya-Saipan**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| NW 077 | 8:45pm | 1:10am+1 | Daily |

**Manila-Saipan**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| CO 890 | 9:15am | 2:55pm | 6 |
| CO 890 | 11:45am | 5:35pm | 3 |

**Seoul-Saipan**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| OZ 605 | 9:00am | 2:30pm | 2,4,6,7 |
| OZ 603 | 7:40pm | 1:00am+1 | 7 |
| OZ 603 | 8:10pm | 1:30am+1 | 1,2,3,4,5,6 |

**Busan-Saipan**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| OZ 607 | 9:30pm | 2:50am+1 | 3,4,6,7 |

**Guanzhou-Saipan**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| CZ 3007 | 8:00pm | 4:00am+1 | 1,5 |

**Shanghai-Saipan**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| MU 589 | 8:05pm | 3:00am+1 | 1,5 |

**Manila-Guam**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| CO 894 | 11:20am | 4:55pm | 2,7 |
| CO 894 | 7:45pm | 1:20am+1 | 6 |
| CO 892 | 9:45pm | 5:25am+1 | 3 via Koror |
| CO 892 | 9:45pm | 6:30am+1 | 3 via Koror and Yap |
| CO 892 | 10:10pm | 5:30am+1 | 5 via Koror |
| CO 934 | 11:10pm | 4:40am+1 | Daily |
| PR 110 | 10:15pm | 4:00am+1 | 1,3,5,6,7 |

**Hongkong-Guam**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| CO 910 | 11:40pm | 6:20am+1 | 1,5 |

**Rota-Guam**

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| CO 9313 | 9:30am | 10:00am | 3,4,7 |

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; PR: Philippine Airlines; CZ: China Southern; CA: Air China; NW: Northwest; JO: Japan Airlines; OZ: Asiana; MU: China Eastern ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

## FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

| Airline | ETD | ETA | Frequency |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Guam-Rota** | | | |
| FRE 100 | 7:00am | 7:30am | Daily |
| **Rota-Saipan** | | | |
| FRE 100 | 7:50am | 8:20am | Daily |
| **Saipan-Rota** | | | |
| FRE 200 | 9:00am | 9:30am | Daily |
| **Rota-Guam** | | | |
| FRE 200 | 9:50am | 10:15am | Daily |
| **Guam-Rota** | | | |
| FRE 300 | 4:00pm | 4:30pm | Daily |
| **Rota-Saipan** | | | |
| FRE 300 | 4:50pm | 5:25pm | Daily |
| **Saipan-Rota** | | | |
| FRE 400 | 6:00pm | 6:30pm | Daily |
| **Rota-Guam** | | | |
| FRE 400 | 6:45pm | 7:15pm | Daily |
| **Saipan-Tinian** | | | |
| FRE 101 | 6:45am | 6:55am | Daily |
| FRE 103 | 7:30am | 7:40am | Daily |
| FRE 105 | 8:00am | 8:10am | Daily |
| FRE 107 | 8:40am | 8:50am | Daily |
| FRE 109* | 9:10am | 9:20am | Daily |
| FRE 111* | 10:45am | 10:55am | Daily |
| FRE 113 | 11:40am | 11:50am | Daily |
| FRE 115 | 1:00pm | 1:10pm | Daily |
| FRE 117 | 2:30pm | 2:40pm | Daily |
| FRE 119 | 4:00pm | 4:10pm | Daily |
| FRE 121 | 4:40pm | 4:50pm | Daily |
| FRE 123 * | 5:40pm | 5:50pm | Daily |
| FRE 125 * | 6:00pm | 6:10pm | Daily |
| **Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**** | | | |
| FRE 102 | 7:05am | 7:15am | Daily |
| FRE 104 | 7:50am | 8:00am | Daily |
| FRE 106** | 8:20am | 8:30am | Daily |
| FRE 108** | 9:00am | 9:10am | Daily |
| FRE 110 | 10:00am | 10:10am | Daily |
| FRE 112 | 11:05am | 11:15am | Daily |
| FRE 114 | 12:00pm | 12:10pm | Daily |
| FRE 116 | 1:30pm | 1:40pm | Daily |
| FRE 118 | 2:50pm | 3:00pm | Daily |
| FRE 120** | 4:20pm | 4:30pm | Daily |
| FRE 122** | 5:00pm | 5:10pm | Daily |
| FRE 124 | 6:05pm | 6:15pm | Daily |
| FRE 126 | 6:20pm | 6:30pm | Daily |

## GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

**PICTURES**

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

**REQUIREMENTS**

**For pictures:**

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
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# Business

# Retailers impose new toy safety rules

AP

Fisher-Price's Go, Diego Go! Animal Rescue Railway is displayed at the American International Toy Fair on Friday, Feb. 15, 2008 in New York. Fisher-Price is a division of Mattel.

**NEW YORK** (AP)—After facing recall after recall of millions of Chinese-made items, the nation's biggest toy sellers are imposing stricter measures on their suppliers—including tougher standards for lead content—to get ahead of expected new federal legislation.

Wal-Mart Stores Inc. and Toys "R" Us Inc., the nation's top two toy sellers, are setting a much tighter standard for the amount of lead allowed on surface paint for toys shipped to their chains on or after March 1. The companies are also phasing out chemicals found in PVC, or vinyl, that have raised safety concerns in products for infants and young children.

The measures are meant to meet or exceed new federal standards expected from Congress in the wake of last year's highly publicized recalls of millions of toys because they contained excessive amounts of lead or other hazards.

"We made a commitment to the world that we would push forward toy safety as a top priority," said Gerald L. Storch, chairman and CEO of Toys "R" Us, which announced the measures Friday. "This is not the last improvement that we will put in place."

Laura Phillips, vice president and chief toy officer for Wal-Mart, noted that the company is "in the season of writing orders" and needed to make the appropriate changes.

The moves come as the industry gears up for the annual American International Toy Fair, which officially begins Sunday. While stores say that parents' anxiety about toy safety has subsided, retailers and toy makers can't afford another major recall and said they need to become extra vigilant.

## BUSINESS BRIEFS

### Industrial output posts weak gain

**WASHINGTON** (AP)—The nation's industrial output posted a modest increase in January but all of the strength came from a weather-related jump in output at utility companies. Analysts said the poor performance was the latest sign that the economy has slowed significantly in recent weeks. The Federal Reserve reported Friday that industrial production rose by 0.1 percent in January, a weak showing which matched the December increase and was in line with expectations. But all of the strength came from a big 2.2 percent rise in output to heat homes and businesses as cold weather returned following a milder-than-normal December when utility output had fallen by 0.2 percent. In contrast, manufacturing output was flat—the poorest showing in three months as factories were feeling the effects of a slowdown that has raised worries the country is slipping into a recession.

### Morgan Stanley CEO pay package is $1.5M

**NEW YORK** (AP)—Morgan Stanley on Friday said Chief Executive John Mack received compensation valued at about $1.5 million in fiscal 2007, a year when the investment bank's profit plunged 57 percent. Mack did not receive a bonus in 2007 because of the company's losses due to the subprime crisis. Morgan Stanley lost $3.59 billion during the fourth-quarter because of risky bets on mortgage-backed securities. None of the executive committee members at Bear Stearns Cos., the fifth-biggest securities firm, are taking bonuses after a $1.9 billion write-down during the fourth quarter. Meanwhile, Merrill Lynch & Co. CEO Stan O'Neal was ousted from his job and didn't receive any 2007 bonus.

### FGIC expected to split operations

**ALBANY, N.Y.** (AP)—New York regulators are eager to consider splitting Financial Guaranty Insurance Co.'s core bond insurance businesses to protect municipal credit ratings against costly downgrades and stem troubles in the debt markets. In a statement Friday, FGIC said would like to organize a new domestic financial guarantee insurer in New York to "provide support for public finance obligations previously insured by FGIC." Analysts said other bond insurers are likely to make similar moves to split their exposure to riskier financial instruments.

## Uranium mining advocates seek risk study

**CHATHAM, Va.** (AP)—You couldn't say Walter Coles Sr. is sitting on a pot of gold. Close, though. The hundreds of acres of rolling Virginia farmland in his family for five generations contain the largest unmined uranium deposit in the nation, worth an estimated $10 billion.

The existence of the deposit has been known since the 1980s, but a spike in the price of uranium has renewed interest in mining it. That is cause for hope by advocates in a region with an economy crippled by the loss of the textile and tobacco industries and angst among residents who fear radiation contamination.

Coles and his partners have formed Virginia Uranium Inc., but can't pull ore out of the ground right now. Virginia has a moratorium on uranium mining that was imposed in 1983, when a now-defunct company called Marline Uranium considered extracting the ore in this corner of Pittsylvania County.

If Coles' company eventually is permitted to mine the ore, it would be the first such enterprise on the East Coast.

The most that can happen anytime soon is that the Virginia General Assembly will approve a study of whether uranium mining can be done safely, and what controls are needed to protect the environment and residents.

That is what Coles wants, and he has offered to pay the bill, which could be $1 million.

## Lackluster reports leave stocks mixed

**NEW YORK** (AP)—Stocks finished mixed as lackluster economic reports offered Wall Street little incentive to place big bets ahead of a long weekend.

Disappointing data on manufacturing, consumer confidence and import prices reminded investors on Friday that the economy is struggling. As a result, a week that began with a rally closed on a subdued note.

A New York Federal Reserve survey on regional manufacturing indicated that conditions have deteriorated this month, while the preliminary Reuters/University of Michigan survey on consumer sentiment for February showed a marked decline from the prior month. A Labor Department report found that import prices have jumped amid higher oil prices.

Friday's market declines, while not severe, occurred a day after investors' revealed their skittishness about the economy and sent stocks down more than 1 percent. The pullback, which came after strong gains earlier in the week, followed somewhat downcast remarks about the economy from Federal Reserve Chairman Ben Bernanke.

With stock markets closed Monday for the Presidents Day holiday and fresh economic concerns, investors appeared uninterested in making any sizable moves.

"The fear factor still sits in the minds of investors," said Bill Schultz, chief investment officer at McQueen, Ball & Associates in Bethlehem, Pa. "We just can't get over that hurdle."

**PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY**
**CNMI GOVERNMENT**

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
**RFP NO.: RFP08-DEQ-021**

**SUBMISSION: March 12, 2008** **TIME: 2:00 P.M.**

**"DEVELOPMENT OF THE CNMI BROWNFIELDS VOLUNTARY RESPONSE PROGRAM GUIDANCE DOCUMENT AND PROGRAM FORMS FOR THE DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY"**

COPIES OF THE SCOPE OF WORK MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY OFFICE, LOCATED IN THE GUALO RAI CENTER BUILDING, SAIPAN, OR ELECTRONICALLY BE E-MAIL TO **raymasga@deq.gov.mp.**

**A PRE-PROPOSAL MEETING** IS SCHEDULED FOR **1:00 P.M., ON FEBRUARY 27, 2008** IN THE 2ND FLOOR DEQ CONFERENCE ROOM. QUESTION REGARDING THIS PROJECT MAY BE SUBMITTED BY FACSIMILE TO **MR. RAY MASGA, MANAGER SITE ASSESSMENT AND REMEDIATION BRANCH,** AT (670) 664-8540 OR BY E-MAIL AT **raymasga@deq.gov.mp.** NO LATER THAN THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS **FEBRUARY 29, 2008.**

**/s/ DAVID B. ROSARIO**
ACTING DIRECTOR, DEQ

**/s/ HERMAN S. SABLAN**
DIRECTOR, P&S

Torcuato and Anna Castro
P.O. Box
Saipan, MP 96950
Telephone No. 234-1331

PRO SE

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT
OF THE
COMMONWEALTH OF THE
NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| IN RE THE MATTER OF THE PETITION TO APPOINT GENERAL GUARDIANSHIP FOR: **HERMAN MANGLONA MANGLONA III** Minor Child by TORCUATO M. CASTRO and ANNA C. CASTRO Petitioners. | ) ) ) ) ) ) ) ) ) ) ) ) ) | FCD GU CIVIL ACTION NO. 08-0080 NOTICE OF HEARING |

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a Petition for Appointment of Guardianship for the above-named minor children by Tortuaco and Anna Castro Petitioners, was filed with the above-entitled Honorable Court and is open for review at the office of the Clerk of the said Court in Susupe, Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

A HEARING of said petition for Guardianship will held at the above-entitled Honorable Court at Guma Hustisia Building, Susupe, Saipan, NMI, before the Honorable Kenneth Govendo on the 10th day of March, 2008 at 1:30 p.m. or as soon as thereafter.

Bernadita A. Sablan
Clerk of Court

/s/ By: Deputy Clerk of Court

Northern Mariana Islands
RETIREMENT FUND
"Investing For The Future Financial Security Of Our Members"

**JOB VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT**
**(REANNOUNCEMENT)**
**JVA# 08-003**

**OPENING DATE: February 8, 2008** **CLOSING DATE: Until Filled**

**Position: Chief Internal Auditor**
**Location: Saipan**

**NATURE OF WORK:** The Chief Internal Auditor is responsible for performing, planning and administering comprehensive internal audits of the NMI Retirement Fund and its component organizations. Responsibility includes supervising the work of lower-level auditors, ensuring that subordinate staff receives adequate direction, guidance, and training and that work performed meets prescribed standards. The Chief Internal Auditor reports directly to the Fund Board of Trustees.

**MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS:** Individual must possess a bachelor's degree and graduation from an accredited college or university with major course work in accounting, finance, economics, business management, business administration, or criminal justice. Plus, he/she must have attained a professional certification. Acceptable certifications include: Certified Public Accountant (CPA), or Certified Internal Auditor (CIA), or other relevant audit-related certification. In addition, must have five years of auditing experience, with at least one year of experience in the role of lead auditor.

**COMPENSATION:** The compensation range for this position is between $40,000 - $50,000 per annum plus other benefits as mandated by law.

Interested individuals may pick up an application and the complete Position Description from the NMI Retirement Fund, Capitol Hill, Saipan. All application packages must be received at the Fund office, Saipan; applications will be accepted by e-mail and/or postal mail. **Incomplete application packages will not be accepted.** Packages must be marked "**JVA# 08-003 - Confidential.**" Interested applicants must submit their **application, resume, educational credentials and police clearance** addressed to the following:

**Mark Aguon, Administrator**
**NMI Retirement Fund**
**P.O. Box 501247**
**Saipan, MP 96950-1247**
**E-mail: administrator01@nmiretirement.com**

**PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY**
**CNMI GOVERNMENT**

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
**RFP NO.: RFP08-DEQ-036**

**SUBMISSION: March 12, 2008** **TIME: 2:00 P.M.**

**"DEVELOPMENT OF A HEALTH AND SAFETY PROGRAM FOR THE DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY"**

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**A PRE-PROPOSAL MEETING** IS SCHEDULED FOR **2:00 P.M., ON FEBRUARY 27, 2008** IN THE 2ND FLOOR DEQ CONFERENCE ROOM. QUESTION REGARDING THIS PROJECT MAY BE SUBMITTED BY FACSIMILE TO **MR. JIM CALLIER, SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO THE DIRECTOR,** AT (670) 664-8540 OR BY E-MAIL AT **jamescallier@deq.gov.mp.** NO LATER THAN THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS **FEBRUARY 29, 2008.**

**/s/ DAVID B. ROSARIO**
ACTING DIRECTOR, DEQ

**/s/ HERMAN S. SABLAN**
DIRECTOR, P&S

**PROCUREMENT AND SUPPLY**
**CNMI GOVERNMENT**

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
**RFP NO.: RFP08-DEQ-037**

**SUBMISSION: March 12, 2008** **TIME: 2:00 P.M.**

**"HISTORICAL RESEARCH AND THE CONDUCT OF BROWNFIELDS INNVENTORY AND SURVEY OF MILITARY SITES OF THE ISLANDS OF TINIAN AND ROTA FOR THE DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY"**

COPIES OF THE SCOPE OF WORK MAY BE OBTAINED AT THE DIVISION OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY OFFICE, LOCATED IN THE GUALO RAI CENTER BUILDING, SAIPAN, OR ELECTRONICALLY BE E-MAIL TO **raymasga@deq.gov.mp.**

**A PRE-PROPOSAL MEETING** IS SCHEDULED FOR **3:00 P.M., ON FEBRUARY 27, 2008** IN THE 2ND FLOOR DEQ CONFERENCE ROOM. QUESTION REGARDING THIS PROJECT MAY BE SUBMITTED BY FACSIMILE TO **MR. RAY MASGA, MANAGER SITE ASSESSMENT AND REMEDIATION BRANCH,** AT (670) 664-8540 OR BY E-MAIL AT **raymasga@deq.gov.mp.** NO LATER THAN THE CLOSE OF BUSINESS **FEBRUARY 29, 2008.**

**/s/ DAVID B. ROSARIO**
ACTING DIRECTOR, DEQ

**/s/ HERMAN S. SABLAN**
DIRECTOR, P&S

# Nation

## Police investigate NIU shooter's 2 sides

**DEKALB, Ill.** (AP)—Steven Kazmierczak had the look of a boyish graduate student—except for the disturbing tattoos that covered his arms.

Professors and students knew him as a bright, helpful scholar, but his past included a stint in a mental health center.

Many saw him as happy and stable, but he had developed a recent interest in guns and was involved in a troubled—possibly abusive—on-again, off-again relationship.

What people initially told police about the Northern Illinois University shooter didn't add up, and now investigators are searching for answers to what triggered Thursday's bloody attack, in which five students were killed and several more injured before Kazmierczak committed suicide.

While searching for a motive, authorities questioned family and friends and tried to determine whether he had recently broken up with his longtime girlfriend.

One person who knew the couple, who spoke to The Associated Press on the condition of anonymity, said the couple's relationship was on-again, off-again and "really rocky." Kazmierczak was controlling, she said.

"He was abusive, had a temper," she said. "He didn't actually hit her; he would push her around."

The 27-year-old Kazmierczak also had a history of mental illness and had become erratic in the past two weeks after he stopped taking his medication, said university Police Chief Donald Grady.

AP

This undated image obtained from a MySpace webpage shows Steven Kazmierczak, who was identified by Florida authorities and a university official familiar with the investigation as the gunman who killed five people at Northern Illinois University.

A former employee at a Chicago psychiatric treatment center said Kazmierczak had been placed there after high school by his parents. He used to cut himself and had resisted taking his medications, she said.

Kazmierczak spent more than a year at the Thresholds-Mary Hill House in the late 1990s, former house manager Louise Gbadamashi told The Associated Press. His parents placed him there after high school because he had become "unruly" at home, she said.

Gbadamashi couldn't remember any instances of him being violent, she said.

"He never wanted to identify with being mentally ill," she said. "That was part of the problem."

Jason Dunavan, a tattoo artist in Champaign, said he spent hours as recently as last month creating tattoos for Kazmierczak. His work included an image of the macabre doll from the horror movie "Saw" riding a tricycle through a pool of blood with images of several bleeding cuts in the background.

Dunavan said he was so proud of the tattoo that he enlarged a photo of it and placed it on a wall in his shop—a move he is now rethinking.

## McCain gains 50 delegates in Mich., La.

**LANSING, Mich.** (AP)—Sen. John McCain, the presumed Republican presidential nominee, picked up a total of 50 GOP national convention delegates from Michigan and Louisiana Saturday.

Republicans met in both states to resolve how to divvy up delegates to the national convention in September.

Thirty-two of Louisiana's 47 delegates told The Associated Press they intend to vote for McCain, and three others also are expected to back him.

Likewise, a majority of Michigan's presidential delegates also say they'll back the Arizona senator now that primary winner Mitt Romney is out of the race, although it's still unclear how many will go to the national convention.

As a result, McCain has 903 total delegates nationally, according to an Associated Press tally. Former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee has 245, while Romney's total dropped to 253. A total of 1,191 are needed to secure the nomination.

The McCain campaign said 43 of Louisiana's delegates have signed pledges to vote for McCain.

The Republican National Committee stripped Michigan of half its 60 delegates for defying party rules by moving its presidential primary to Jan. 15.

Counting just the 30 Michigan delegates allowed so far, 23 were supposed to go to Romney, who won Michigan's Jan. 15 primary. Although those delegates technically will go the Sept. 1-4 Republican National Convention in Minneapolis-St. Paul uncommitted to any candidate, 18 now say they'll back McCain.

With the Romney delegates divvied up, McCain has the backing of 24 Michigan national delegates, while Huckabee has the backing of four. It was unclear which candidate two delegates would back.

But GOP activists are sure they'll get 57 pledged delegates and three unpledged delegates seated in Minneapolis-St. Paul, so they filled all those spots—plus 57 for alternates—during their state convention Friday and Saturday at the Lansing Center.

In Louisiana, Republicans meeting Saturday in Baton Rouge selected 44 of the state's 47 national GOP convention delegates.

## *Clinton aide urges seating delegates*

**WASHINGTON**(AP)—Harold Ickes, a top adviser to Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton's campaign who voted for Democratic Party rules that stripped Michigan and Florida of their delegates, now is arguing against the very penalty he helped pass.

In a conference call Saturday, the longtime Democratic Party member contended the DNC should reconsider its tough sanctions on the two states, which held early contests in violation of party rules. He said millions of voters in Michigan and Florida would be otherwise disenfranchised—before acknowledging moments later that he had favored the sanctions.

Campaigning in Wisconsin after Ickes' remarks, Clinton echoed his contention that a suitable arrangement could be worked out to seat the Michigan and Florida delegations.

"The rules provide for a vote at the convention to seat contested delegations," she said. "This goes back to the 1940s in my memory. There is nothing unusual about this. My husband didn't wrap up the nomination until June. Usually it takes awhile to sort all this out. That's why there are rules. If there are contested delegations, the convention votes on it."

Ickes explained that his different position essentially is due to the different hats he wears as both a DNC member and a Clinton adviser in charge of delegate counting. Clinton won the primary vote in Michigan and Florida, and now she wants those votes to count.

"There's been no change," Ickes said. "I was not acting as an agent of Mrs. Clinton. We had promulgated rules and those rules said the timing provision ... provides for certain sanctions, automatic sanctions as a matter of fact, if a state such as Michigan or Florida violates those timing provisions."

### ACROSS THE NATION

#### Car hits Md. street-race crowd; 8 killed

**ACCOKEEK, Md.** (AP)—A car plowed into a group of street-racing fans obscured by a cloud of tire smoke on a highway Saturday, killing eight people and scattering bodies in the early morning darkness. At least five others were injured in the gruesome wreck along a flat, isolated stretch of highway about 20 miles south of Washington known for illegal races. About 50 people were gathered before dawn along Route 210 as two cars spun their wheels, kicked up smoke and sped off, said Prince George's County police Cpl. Clinton Copeland. Fans had spilled onto the smoky, dark road to watch the cars drive away when a white Ford Crown Victoria unexpectedly came up from behind and smashed into them.

#### NYPD arrests man in therapist slaying

**NEW YORK** (AP)—A 39-year-old man with a history of mental problems was arrested Saturday in the vicious slaying of a psychologist attacked in her office with a meat cleaver, police said. David Tarloff of Queens was taken into custody in the morning after investigators matched him with three palm prints found at the bloody crime scene, said Police Commissioner Raymond Kelly. Tarloff made statements incriminating himself during a 25-minute interrogation, Kelly said. The questioning stopped when he asked for a lawyer, and it wasn't clear later Saturday whether he had an attorney. Murder and attempted murder charges are pending, Kelly said.

#### In Reno, a body is found and fear mounts

**RENO, Nev.** (AP)—A 19-year-old college student missing since she was abducted nearly a month ago was strangled by a serial rapist who has attacked at least two other women and may strike again, Reno police said Saturday. An autopsy confirmed that a dead woman found Friday in a brush-covered field near a business park was Brianna Denison and that she died of strangulation, Reno Deputy Police Chief Jim Johns said. Her body had been in the field for more than a week about 8 miles from the house where she last was seen early Jan. 20 at the edge of the University of Nevada, Reno, he said. "I would say this is a serial rapist," Johns said at a news conference. "We have two, probably three (cases) linked through DNA."

#### Report finds problems with NJ gay unions

**MOUNT LAUREL, N.J.** (AP)—A commission established to study same-sex civil unions in New Jersey has found in its first report that civil unions create a "second-class status" for gay couples, rather than giving them equality. The report stops short of recommending that the state allow gay marriage. But it does find that gay couples in Massachusetts, the only state that now allows same-sex marriage, do not experience some of the legal complications that those in New Jersey do. The Associated Press obtained a copy of the initial report, which was scheduled to be made public Tuesday, the first anniversary of the state's first civil unions.

## Mournful stretch begins after Ga. blast

**SAVANNAH, Ga.** (AP)—A vase of red roses sat in front of the church altar Saturday, flanked by portraits of Truitt Byers and a blue baseball cap with the logo for Dixie Crystals—the brand of sugar produced by a refinery where the 54-year-old was killed in an explosion.

The first memorial services for Byers and the other victims came a day after crews recovered the final body from inside the Imperial Sugar refinery in Port Wentworth west of Savannah. The explosion killed nine people Feb. 7—eight found dead inside the plant, and a ninth worker who died of burns at an Augusta hospital.

"The next few days are going to be very sad for everybody," Keith Jones, a refinery mechanic, said Saturday as he left the funeral for Byers.

Byers had worked as an operator mechanic at the refinery for 22 years. More than 250 people, including dozens of co-workers, attended his memorial service at Immanuel Baptist Church as Byers' wife, Debra, sobbed into a tissue while sitting with their son and daughter.

The Rev. Larry Williams read a statement compiled by family members who described Byers as a fun-loving man with a bounce in his walk who "always made you laugh, even when he wasn't trying to."

Co-worker Garry Hendricks recalled that Byers could fall asleep "at the drop of a hat" if he had to sit still for more than a few minutes—such as when he nodded off during a meeting at the refinery a week before the explosion.

"I was sitting next to Truitt at the meeting and heard a loud snoring," Williams read from Hendricks' written remembrance. "I had to elbow him awake. Two minutes later, he woke himself up snoring, looking around the room to see who had made the noise."

Relatives recalled their first ski trip to Snowmass, Colo., when Byers grew wary after seeing signs on the slopes that read "Beware of Sno-Cats."

# Asia

# Pakistan campaign rally bombing kills 37

**ISLAMABAD, Pakistan** (AP)—A suicide bomber rammed a car packed with explosives into a crowd following a rally for a candidate allied with the opposition, killing 37 people and heightening fears of Islamic militant violence during Monday's crucial parliamentary elections.

Most of the victims of Saturday's attack appeared to be members of the opposition Pakistan People's Party, formerly led by the slain Benazir Bhutto. They had gathered at the home of the targeted candidate following the rally in a volatile tribal region bordering Afghanistan, said Mushtaq Hussain, an administrative official in the area.

"Several of our party members are lying in a pool of blood," said Zafar Ali, a party supporter at the scene.

The attack came two days before elections considered crucial to restoring democracy in Pakistan after eight years of military rule under President Pervez Musharraf. Recent opinion polls show the opposition poised for a landslide victory amid disenchantment Musharraf's rule.

In addition to rising political discontent following Musharraf's decisions in the last year to impose emergency rule and purge the judiciary, he is battling a rising Islamic militancy, especially in the northwest.

In another area along the border, a second car bombing near a checkpoint killed two civilians and wounded eight security personnel, said army spokesman Maj. Gen. Athar Abbas. That blast occurred near Swat, a former tourist destination where security forces have battled armed supporters of a pro-Taliban cleric in recent months.

The candidate targeted in the first suicide bombing, Syed Riaz Hussain, was unharmed. He is backed by the opposition PPP.

The injured poured into a nearby hospital, many in critical condition with severe burn wounds, doctors said.

Interior Ministry spokesman Javed Iqbal Cheema said 37 people were killed and more than 90 wounded when a suicide bomber drove into a crowd as they were preparing to eat in the town of Parachinar.

Asked who could be behind the bombing, he said those "who want to derail the election process."

The Dec. 27 assassination of opposition leader Bhutto and a string of suicide bombings—some targeting campaign rallies—have been blamed on al-Qaida—or Taliban-linked militants.

For some, the biggest fear is major violence between political parties if there are widespread allegations of cheating.

Highlighting those tensions, hundreds of police surrounded and then clashed with more than 1,500 supporters of a coalition of anti-Musharraf parties boycotting the vote in the southwestern city of Quetta on Saturday.

AP

An injured victim of suicide bombing is treated at a local hospital in Parachinar, Pakistan, Saturday, Feb. 16, 2008.

## *Pakistan votes; fears violence, rigging*

**ISLAMABAD, Pakistan** (AP)—Eight weeks after Benazir Bhutto was slain, Pakistan is holding elections that could shepherd a troubled nation into a new era of civilian rule and gird it against the Islamic extremists suspected of her killing.

Yet Monday's vote also heralds uncertainty. A vote rigged in favor of the unpopular government could spark violent unrest, while an opposition landslide would set up a showdown with President Pervez Musharraf, Washington's key ally in the war on terrorism.

Public disenchantment after eight years of military rule, and sympathy for Bhutto who was assassinated in a Dec. 27 suicide attack, look set to propel her opposition Pakistan People's Party to victory, although her successor as party leader, husband Asif Ali Zardari, has been tainted by corruption allegations.

Opinion polls give second place to the party of another former prime minister, Nawaz Sharif, whose government was toppled in Musharraf's 1999 coup.

The pro-Musharraf party, the Pakistan Muslim League-Q, is running a distant third, its unpopularity compounded by sharply rising food prices and power outages. Its ratings have plummeted with Musharraf's as he has maneuvered to stay in power through an explosion of Taliban militancy.

Monday's elections are taking place against a backdrop of rising Islamic militancy throughout Pakistan, and many candidates have been discouraged from holding large rallies. Security fears are highest in lawless tribal areas along the Afghan border.

## ASIAN BRIEFS

### Bird flu kills another Indonesian boy

**JAKARTA, Indonesia** (AP)—A 3-year-old Indonesian boy has died of bird flu, a health official said Saturday, announcing the country's second death from the illness in one day. The two cases, which were apparently unrelated, brought Indonesia's bird flu death toll to 105. The latest victim was identified only as Han, a 3-year-old boy from the southern part of the capital, Jakarta, radio El-Shinta reported. It said he died Friday at a hospital in the city. Senior Health Ministry official Nyoman Kandun confirmed the report and said laboratory tests confirmed the boy had the dangerous H5N1 strain of the bird flu virus. It was not clear how he was infected, and Kandun gave no further details.

### Malaysian police break up Indian rally

**KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia** (AP)—Malaysian police fired tear gas Saturday to disperse about 200 ethnic Indians protesting to demand racial equality ahead of a general election. It was the first public gathering by the Hindu Rights Action Force since police used tear gas and water cannon to crush a Nov. 25 demonstration by at least 20,000 ethnic Indians in Kuala Lumpur. The country's minority Indians have long complained of racial discrimination in this Malay, Muslim-majority country. Police detained 124 people Saturday, but all were released except nine who will be charged with participating in an illegal assembly, said Kuala Lumpur police chief Muhammad Sabtu Osman.

### China: rich `culprits' on climate change

**UNITED NATIONS** (AP)—Negotiations on a new treaty to fight global warming will fail if rich nations are not treated as "culprits" and developing countries as "victims," China's top climate envoy said. The whole world must take action to confront climate change, but developed countries have a "historical responsibility" to do much more because their unrestrained emissions in the past century are responsible for global warming, said Ambassador Yu Qingtai. "The United States and the developed states as a whole are the countries that created the problem, caused the problem of climate change in the first place. In my view, that's what a culprit means," he said in an interview this week on the sidelines of the U.N. General Assembly debate on climate change.

### 14 killed by Maoist rebels in India

**BHUBANESWAR, India** (AP)—Hundreds of Maoist militants stormed six police compounds in eastern India in carefully coordinated attacks Friday night, killing 13 police personnel and one civilian, a top police official said. Eleven more policemen were injured. The attacks—on four police stations, one training academy and an armory—were scattered across the Nayagarh district, about 60 miles from Bhubaneswar, the capital of Orissa state, said Gopal Chandra Nanda, director general of the state police. The area is about 1,100 miles southeast of capital New Delhi. Nanda said about 400 of the militants, known as Naxalites, were involved in the attacks, and that security forces were combing the area in search of them.

## NKorea wants aid before nuclear report

**BEIJING** (AP)—North Korea wants promised energy aid and removal from U.S. terrorism and sanctions blacklists before it will provide a complete declaration of its nuclear programs, American researchers said Saturday after a trip to the North.

North Korean officials also said they slowed the removal of fuel rods from the country's Yongbyon reactor because the United States and other nations have fallen behind in supplying aid under an Oct. 3 disarmament pact, said Siegfried Hecker, a Stanford University physicist, and Joel Wit, a former State Department expert on the North.

Hecker and Wit said they visited Yongbyon and met with top foreign affairs officials and those in charge of the nuclear program but declined to disclose their names. Also traveling with them was Keith Luce, a staff member for Sen. Richard Lugar, an Indiana Republic.

The October deal calls for the North to disable its nuclear facilities and fully declare its nuclear programs in exchange for energy aid and political concessions, including removal from the U.S. terrorism list by the end of 2007.

"To them, the most significant hurdle was ... the lack of the delivery of fuel oil and the lack of any motion in removal from the states sponsoring terrorism list and the Trading with the Enemy Act," Hecker said in Beijing. "They said until that is done, they will not be able to produce what (U.S. nuclear envoy) Ambassador (Christopher) Hill calls a `complete and correct' declaration."

Hecker and Wit's account suggested North Korean officials were confirming U.S. claims that they have failed to provide the accounting of nuclear programs required by the October deal.

## Thousands turn up in prayer protest against Philippine president

**MANILA, Philippines** (AP)—Thousands of protesters gathered Sunday for a Mass led by Roman Catholic groups and a pro-democracy leader to show support for a star witness in a corruption scandal battering the Philippine government.

Led by rosary-bearing nuns, priests and pro-democracy icon and former President Corazon Aquino, about 3,000 protesters attended the Mass in a suburban Manila Catholic university, criticizing widespread corruption in President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo's government.

The Mass was held a few blocks from a Catholic shrine along the teeming capital's main EDSA highway—the site of two nonviolent "people power" revolts that have ousted two presidents—but police have warned they would break up any protest in the historic shrine.

Organizers said the Mass was dedicated to Rodolfo "Jun" Lozada Jr., a government consultant who publicly exposed alleged large-scale bribery in a US$330 million government broadband contract being investigated by the opposition-dominated Senate. Lozada, who has been hiding in a safehouse, showed up and was met by rousing applause.

Lozada has accused a former elections commission chief of demanding a huge kickback from the government deal with China's telecommunications giant ZTE Corp., which has since been aborted. He also alleged that Arroyo's husband took part in backroom negotiations in the deal.

Both men have denied the allegations, and ZTE denied bribing Philippine officials.

Opposition senators wanted to know if Arroyo herself committed any wrongdoing in the deal. Arroyo's former economic adviser has refused to testify before the Senate about his closed-door talks with the president about the controversial project.

Lozada has also alleged that government security men held him briefly as he arrived from a foreign trip, apparently to prevent him from testifying, prompting him to decide to seek Senate protection and testify. Police have denied the allegation.

# World

# In Kosovo, it's 'Independence Eve'

**PRISTINA, Serbia** (AP)—Tiny Kosovo—poor, mostly Muslim but feverishly pro-Western—braced itself Saturday for a historic declaration of independence from Serbia, a decade after a war that killed 10,000 people and years of limbo under U.N. rule.

The province's bold bid for statehood, expected Sunday, and its quest for international recognition set up an ominous showdown with Serbia and Russia. Moscow contends the move will set a dangerous precedent for secessionist groups worldwide.

Revelers took to the streets in giddy anticipation. Prime Minister Hashim Thaci—a former leader of the guerrilla Kosovo Liberation Army—marked the eve of the new nation's birth by visiting a village where Serbian troops massacred ethnic Albanians in 1998.

"Tomorrow is a historic day in our effort to create a state," Thaci said in Prekaze, about 25 miles southeast of the capital, Pristina.

Thaci, a former leader of the now-disbanded Kosovo Liberation Army, was expected to call a special session of parliament Sunday afternoon to declare an independent Republic of Kosovo and unveil a new flag and national crest.

Kosovars celebrate in central Pristina, in the province of Kosovo, Serbia, Saturday, Feb. 16, 2008. AP

In a televised address later Saturday, Thaci said "everything is a done deal."

"We are getting our independence," he said. "The world's map is changing."

In the provincial capital Pristina, the icing was on celebratory cakes and bottles of "Independence" wine chilled as the new reality sank in.

"Independence is a dream for all the people of Kosovo, and I am very happy, like everybody," said Lumturije Bytyqi, 20.

But Kosovo's small Serb population greeted the secession as though it were an amputation. Many vowed never to accept the loss of a region they consider the heart of their ancestral homeland.

"I'm asking all the Serbs to reject the monster state of Kosovo, and to do everything to prevent its birth," said Marko Jaksic, a Kosovo Serb hard-line leader.

The dancing and drum-beating that pulsed through Pristina—awash in red and black Albanian flags with the distinctive double-headed eagle—contrasted sharply with the gloom gripping the ethnically divided northern town of Kosovska Mitrovica, a Serb stronghold and a flashpoint for violence.

"We are Serbs and this will always be Serbia," said a defiant Djordje Maric, 18. "We are ready to defend our territories at all costs, including with our lives."

Although it is formally part of Serbia, Kosovo has been administered by the U.N. since 1999, when NATO airstrikes ended the late Yugoslav leader Slobodan Milosevic's brutal crackdown on ethnic Albanian separatists.

## Gitmo interrogator describes tactics

**GUANTANAMO BAY NAVAL BASE, Cuba** (AP)—Interrogators got intelligence from detainees that helped U.S. troops in Afghanistan attack Taliban fighters last summer—and they did it through casual questioning and not torture, the military's chief interrogator here said.

In a rare interview with The Associated Press, veteran interrogator Paul Rester complained that his profession has gotten a bad reputation due to accounts of waterboarding and other rough interrogation tactics used by the CIA at "black sites."

Lawyers for Guantanamo detainees, however, allege their clients have been subjected to temperature extremes, sleep deprivation and threats at this U.S. military base in southeast Cuba.

Wearing a blue-striped business shirt without a tie and looking more like a harried executive than a top interrogator, Rester groused that his line of work is "a business that is fundamentally thankless."

He sat hunched over a table in a snack room inside the building where the top commanders keep their offices. In an attempt to keep personnel from blabbing about intelligence-gathering, a poster showed a picture of a hooded gunman and the words: "Keep talking. We're listening"—today's version of the World War II-era admonishment that "Loose lips sink ships."

## UN posts refugee official in Baghdad

**BAGHDAD** (AP)—The United Nations refugee chief said Saturday he is sending a representative to Baghdad to help millions of displaced Iraqis return home, showing a strengthened U.N. commitment to deal with the crisis and confidence in recent security gains.

U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees Antonio Guterres also pledged to increase his group's staffing level in Baghdad from two to five people. "We have confidence in the future of Iraq," Guterres said at a joint news conference with Iraq Foreign Minister Hoshyar Zebari.

Meanwhile, the top Iraqi commander for Baghdad, Lt. Gen. Abboud Qanbar, said the number of bullet-riddled bodies found daily has dropped from at least 43 to about four under a year-old U.S.-Iraqi security crackdown in the capital.

The statement was tempered by warnings that the battle was not over.

"An end date cannot be set for this security plan because of the kind of battle we are fighting against an enemy represented by insurgency and terrorism," Qanbar said.

Iraqi Defense Minister Abdul-Qader al-Obeidi said separately that the buildup of U.S. troops has helped secure most of Baghdad. But challenges remain from al-Qaida in the north and what he called "criminals, gangs and smugglers" in the south, where Shiite militias are involved in a violent power struggle.

He said U.S. troops should remain in Iraq until domestic security forces are able to take their place, and the long-term need for U.S. troops will be mostly related to border protection.

"There is 90 percent security in the capital," al-Obeidi told The Associated Press on the sidelines of a meeting in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

Yet deadly violence in the streets of Baghdad remains a daily occurrence.

## Power shift brings uncertainty to Russia

**MOSCOW** (AP)—As Russia prepares for March 2 presidential elections, it enters an era of political uncertainty it hasn't seen since President Vladimir Putin succeeded Boris Yeltsin eight years ago.

Putin's longtime protege, Dmitry Medvedev, is expected to emerge as the victor, thanks to the support of the Kremlin's political and media muscle. But what policies a President Medvedev might pursue—or even whether he will be more than a figurehead—are a mystery.

Medvedev has said he will ask his friend and mentor, Putin, to become his prime minister, and emphasizes that he will pursue Putin's policies. If Putin accepts the premiership, Medvedev is expected to serve as Putin's understudy through at least his first months in office—an unprecedented situation.

He will face huge challenges at home and abroad. Within eight months he will be facing a new U.S. president-elect, while inheriting relations with the West that are at their lowest ebb since the Soviet era. Russia's next leader needs to come to an understanding with Europe and the U.N. about future NATO expansion and plans for an anti-missile system near Russia's borders. And he must reassure the world that Russia is a constructive, unthreatening partner while maintaining ties with Iran, North Korea and other regimes considered pariahs in the West.

If Medvedev has any new ideas for dealing with these issues, he hasn't revealed them in his carefully scripted public appearances. He hasn't even formally campaigned or agreed to debate his rivals.

He has, however, given voters a glimpse behind his serious public face, as he did Monday when the rock group "Deep Purple" performed a concert for him at the Kremlin. He spoke nostalgically about being a fan as a teenager, when the band's music was forbidden in the Soviet Union.

## WORLD BRIEFS

### Haiti's efforts to save trees falters

**GRAND COLLINE, Haiti** (AP)—Far from the spreading slums of the Haitian capital, past barren dirt mountains and hillsides stripped to a chalky white core, two woodcutters bring down a towering oak tree in one of the few forested valleys left in the Caribbean country. Fanel Cantave, 36, says he has little choice but to make his living in a way that is causing environmental disaster in Haiti. And these days, he and his 15-year-old son, Phillipe, must travel ever farther from their village to find trees to cut. "There is no other way to get money," the father said, pushing his saw through splintering wood that will earn him as much as $12.50, depending on how many planks it produces. Such raw economics explain the disappearance of Haiti's forests, a process that has led to erosion that has reduced scarce farm land and left the island vulnerable to deadly flooding. U.N. experts say just 2 to 4 percent of forest cover remains in Haiti, down from 7 to 9 percent in 1981. And despite millions invested in reforestation, such efforts have mostly failed because of economic pressures and political turmoil.

### Nearly 300 Somalis killed in January

**MOGADISHU, Somalia** (AP)—Ongoing clashes in the capital left nearly 300 Somalis dead and hundreds more wounded last month, a local human rights group said Saturday. Elman Human Rights said 292 people had been killed and another 325 wounded in Mogadishu in January. Civilians are frequently caught in the crossfire between government troops and their Ethiopian allies and Eritrean-backed Islamic insurgents. "Those who are behind the human rights violations should be brought to justice," said Sudan Ali Ahmed, the organization's chairman. Elman obtains its figures from medical institutions. Obtaining a reliable death toll in Somalia is nearly impossible and the true figure may be higher. Aid groups warn that many injured cannot access treatment because ambulances are often unable to operate and private cars may be shelled or shot at.

### 8 killed in Gaza blast buried

**GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip** (AP)—Gaza's Hamas rulers on Saturday accused aides of moderate Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas of being behind an alleged plot to assassinate a top Hamas official. Abbas' office denied the claims, which set off an angry verbal exchange between the bitter rivals and further dimmed already faint prospects of reconciliation. Meanwhile, thousands marched in a funeral procession for eight Palestinians killed in a huge explosion at the home of a senior Islamic Jihad activist in the Gaza refugee camp of Bureij. Islamic Jihad claimed the eight, including one of its rocket masterminds, were killed in an Israeli airstrike and threatened revenge attacks. Israel routinely targets Gaza militants but denied any involvement in Friday's blast in Bureij.

# Health & Fitness

# A boost for women's low libido?

By JANET CROMLEY
(C) 2008, LOS ANGELES TIMES

Thanks to Viagra, Cialis and Levitra, men with erectile dysfunction can get on board the Food and Drug Administration-approved love train. But women who experience a different sexual problem—sagging libido—have been left at the station.

That may be changing.

BioSante Pharmaceuticals Inc. is testing the safety and effectiveness of LibiGel, a testosterone gel for women designed to combat declines in sexual arousal associated with menopause. There are currently no drugs available in the U.S. specifically approved for pumping up lackluster libido in women.

The Lincolnshire, Ill.,-based company is conducting two trials, comprising 1,000 women, to test the effectiveness of the gel, which is applied to the upper arm. The company will also test the gel's safety in a trial of as many as 3,100 women using LibiGel or a placebo.

If the trials go well, the drug could be available by prescription by 2011, says BioSante chief executive Stephen Simes.

A testosterone gel for menopausal women makes sense medically, says Dr. Richard Paulson, professor of reproductive medicine and chief of reproductive endocrinology at the University of Southern California's Keck School of Medicine.

Both men and women produce the female hormone estradiol and the male hormone testosterone, but in different quantities. When women go through menopause, they lose almost all of their estradiol production and most of their testosterone production. Estrogen (either taken orally or topically applied) helps keep the vaginal tissue strong and elastic, but it doesn't enhance libido.

A testosterone gel, Paulson says, could restore libido and reestablish the pre-menopausal balance between testosterone and estradiol. It could be especially beneficial to women who have had their ovaries surgically removed and lose even the small amounts of testosterone that ovaries produce after menopause. This population "is particularly susceptible to symptoms attributable to the loss of hormone production, such as hot flashes and loss of libido," he says.

Currently, the only option postmenopausal women have for boosting testosterone is off-label use of products developed for men, says Sheryl Kingsberg, chief of Behavioral Medicine at University Hospitals Case Medical Center in Cleveland. "We know that it works—not for everybody—but it works," she says. "And we know that about 20 percent of all prescriptions for testosterone are for women."

But safety, particularly the possibility that testosterone could increase the risk of breast cancer, is still a concern. "We haven't seen serious adverse effects" from use, says Kingsberg, a psychologist and sex researcher, "but we need more data."

The first LibiGel trial was launched in December 2006. About 500 healthy women ages 30 to 65 across the U.S. and Canada who had had their ovaries removed and reported distress over low libido applied LibiGel or a placebo for 24 weeks. Using diaries and questionnaires as measurements, the women documented quantity and quality of sexual events, including intercourse, oral sex and masturbation.

Following treatment, the women using LibiGel reported a significantly increased number of satisfying sexual events compared with baseline measures and compared with the placebo group. Participants reported no serious adverse effects. A second, identical trial will begin in the spring to ensure that the findings can be replicated.

The data have been presented at meetings of the International Society for the Study of Women's Sexual Health and North American Menopause Society.

A third, 12-month study will track cardiovascular events, such as heart attack and stroke, among women taking the drug, and compare them with those of a control group. Participants will be surgically or naturally menopausal women at least 50 years of age, with at least one cardiovascular risk factor, such as hypertension or diabetes.

"The FDA is asking us to study the safety in potentially a higher-risk population in order to prove that, in fact, testosterone is safe for all women," Simes says.

The study will also track the women for breast cancer for an additional four years.

Side effects associated with excessive testosterone in women include oily skin and hair growth in undesirable places, including the face and chest.

Paulson cautions that anyone hoping for an elixir of love is in for a disappointment. "Western society is replete with stories of magical potions that will cause women to become sexually ravenous," he says. "These stories of course are nonsense."

Human sexuality is complex, he adds, and testosterone level is only a small part of the overall picture. "For people who think that they are going to be able to sneak it onto their date's arm while she's not looking—they should forget it."

# Tip that works to remember workouts

LOS ANGELES TIMES
PDAs or cell phones can help keep people on their workout schedule.

By JEANNINE STEIN
(C) 2008, LOS ANGELES TIMES

Cell phones and PDAs can do more than ensure we stay in touch and keep appointments. A new study shows that middle-aged and older people who received daily reminders to exercise from PDAs put in more than twice as much moderate to vigorous exercise than those without the devices.

Such cues "bring the priority of exercise back to the top of the list," says Abby King, lead author of the study and a professor of health research and policy, and medicine, at the Stanford University School of Medicine. "You could be trying to get a report out at work, and all of a sudden that priority slips, and this brings it back up."

The pilot study, published this month in the American Journal of Preventive Medicine, gave PDAs to 19 fairly sedentary men and women who were taught to use the gadgets and encouraged to do at least 150 minutes of moderate or more vigorous exercise a week (most did brisk walking).

The 18-person control group received standard written material about the importance of exercise. At the end of eight weeks, the study group exercised an average of 310 minutes a week; the control group averaged 125 minutes.

# Going the distance, for self or community

By HOWARD SCHNEIDER
(c) 2008, The Washington Post

Troy Allen was an elite athlete in his day, a baseball player at George Washington University whose pro career was cut short by a shoulder injury. For the past decade he has purposefully avoided exercise, but now he is coming back from his "de-training" with an ambitious goal in view: San Diego's Rock 'n' Roll Marathon on June 1.

Donna Grubb-Hewlett, an engineer with the Mitre consulting firm, works out a few times a week but has never trained for distance running. At age "40 plus," she'll be there, too, as will Kate Nounheim, 27, determined to recover the leg muscles she had as a high school cross-country runner.

Diverse in motivation and conditioning, they are among the roughly 270 people from the Washington area who've decided to prepare for a distance event over the next few months with Team in Training, part of the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society. Every participant is given a fund-raising goal that covers airfare to an event, lodging and entry fees, and returns about 75 cents on the dollar to the society. Participants also get the benefit of teammates and coaches to keep them motivated and teach them how to train.

To prepare myself for a couple of upcoming events — the Cherry Blossom 10-miler on April 6, and the new Marine Corps Historic Half Marathon in Fredericksburg, Va., in May — I'll tag along as Troy, Donna, Kate and company get ready for San Diego, and I'll update you on their progress.

Team in Training has proved to be a powerful model, raising $850 million for the leukemia society over 20 years and coaxing about 360,000 athletes through running, biking and triathlon events. And it is an example of how getting into shape does not have to involve hours of solo time on a machine. Training can be a social outlet and a way to help the community as well — whether it's by raising money for a charitable cause or, as previous columns have discussed, supporting recreational and athletic opportunities for kids.

The group's example is also proof that aggressive goals are in reach even for beginners, provided those goals are supported with enough time to train and enough patience to let the training take effect.

Endurance coaching and training philosophies, in fact, have become pretty forgiving in regard to first-timers. Marathons and half-marathons may once have been the province of the hyper-conditioned, and premier races such as the Boston Marathon still require qualifying times for entry. But events such as Washington's Credit Union Cherry Blossom Ten Mile Run encourage novices with online training programs that begin with steps as simple as 20 minutes or so of walking and jogging. Cherry Blossom coach Kirt West builds it up from there so that newcomers "can get through in one piece."

Team in Training coaches take the same beginner-friendly approach as they prepare people for marathon and half-marathon runs as well as Olympic-distance triathlons and century bike events.

Pace is not emphasized. Running is limited to three days a week, with a fourth day for cross-training. The number of miles run is kept on the light side. The first month of workouts for a June 21 half-marathon in Alaska, for example, is limited to runs of three miles. Emphasis is on one long run weekly, done as a group, with the distance increasing steadily. Walking breaks are encouraged.

The aim is for the participants to finish injury-free and without the need for days of recovery.

"If they follow our program, they'll be successful," coach Tina Sparling said.

Carly Samuelson, a campaign director for Team in Training, said that roughly 70 percent of those who start one of its programs finish the event. Many of the dropouts occur because of scheduling, personal issues or other reasons unrelated to the physical side of the training. Those are pretty good odds, I think, if you're a novice looking for a challenge.

The captain of our group is Mark Spisak, a local real estate executive who will be running with his wife, Carol. Along with training for her second marathon, Carol is battling leukemia. The camaraderie of the group, she said, is helpful with the physical endeavor, and in helping cope with the disease.

At a recent kickoff event for this season's round of training, speakers told of being motivated by family members or friends who contracted the disease. When Spisak was training for her first marathon in 2005, she said, the knowledge that a group of people were waiting for her each Saturday — and doing so to help leukemia patients and to further research — helped push her through.

"It's hard to do it alone," she said. "I'm pretty motivated, but you'll develop a different perspective when people are expecting you to show up."

# Life & Style

# Filling a gap that banishes boring

By ADAM TSCHORN
(C) 2008, LOS ANGELES TIMES

**NEW YORK**—Can the Gap be saved? The brand that helped lead America into a casual-clothing revolution has been foundering soullessly for years, beset by competition from stores such as Target and H&M, where people buy cheap chic as well as basics, and a denim market that's so saturated, there's no regaining the stronghold Gap once held.

Now Gap has a new head of design—Patrick Robinson, former artistic director for Paco Rabanne—and last week the company took the unusual step of presenting Robinson's first full collection during New York Fashion Week. Of course, the Gap has made previous forays into serious fashion, followed by a scurrying retreat to basic khakis and sweaters, something Robinson is all too aware of.

Before the presentation he said that Gap "had been pulled from side to side for different reasons" and suffered from "different leadership and different messages." Brian Tunick, a retail analyst with J.P. Morgan, said the Gap's sheer size (1,278 stores in the U.S. and Canada), and its attempt to be all things to all people didn't help either.

"They became so big while everyone else was becoming so specialized," Tunick said. "And now they're trying to walk away from the teen customer ... and really go after that 25- to 35-year-old customer, which is what is in the stores right now. Although what's there is very basic, boring and safe."

Keeping those basics but banishing the boring and safe is what Gap hopes Robinson, who joined the label in May, can do. It is a balancing act that his predecessor from the fashion world—Pina Ferlisi, formerly with Marc by Marc Jacobs—wasn't able to achieve: Gap's North American stores saw sales decline in all but two years since fiscal 2000; this year, sales are down 5 percent from the same period last year.

While Robinson's name is familiar in the fashion realm, his track record with the masses is less clear. He is credited with turning around Giorgio Armani's Collezioni line; his work at Perry Ellis was a hit on the runway but not at the cash register; and his tenure at Paco Rabanne was complicated by corporate restructuring, and the house failed to ship his fall-winter collection. Most recently, his Go International collection of women's clothing and accessories for Target languished.

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Gap has a new head of design, Patrick Robinson, former artistic director for Paco Rabanne.

At last week's presentation, Robinson said the goal behind his fall/winter collection of layered classic pieces "was to take the classic, iconic heritage of the company and make it relevant by doing things (such as) slimming down the cargo pants, taking a peacoat and making it oversized or taking a Chesterfield jacket and shortening it into a bomber."

The collection has a ragamuffin-military vibe that squarely hits several of the season's trends. On the women's side were flared corduroy and denim pants that looked straight out of a Lenny Kravitz video, and slimmed-down and cropped cargo pants.

LOS ANGELES TIMES

Robinson's collection plays on layered classic pieces.

Tops and dresses were loose, with cute drop-waist dresses in faded plaids and airy, almost gauzy blouses. Outerwear included washed leather jackets and a short khaki trench.

For the men, in addition to khaki pants (slimmer-fitting, flat-front), there were suiting gray trousers, plaid-accented puffer vests, plaid button-front shirts, waffle-weave cardigans and a jersey sweater hoodie.

Robinson tweaked the long sleeve Henley, turning it into a short sleeve, single-button tee that is destined to become a classic Gap piece. Accessories included chunky knit hats, plaid-accented scarves and Pierre Hardy for Gap combat boots (for him), jodhpur boots (for her) and desert boots (for both).

For now, the tough economic conditions could give the Gap a boost, as more customers are looking to stretch their wardrobe dollar by buying spiffy basics. And that black shearling jacket with an empire line has just enough style to fill (and pay) the bill.

## French crooner Henri Salvador dies at 90

**PARIS** (AP)—Henri Salvador, the velvet-voiced French musician credited with inspiring the bossa nova, bringing rock 'n' roll to France and helping create the music video, died Wednesday, his record label said. He was 90.

Salvador died at his Paris home of an aneurysm, said Carine Herve, of the Polydor label.

Salvador was known for his claps of booming laughter, raucous sense of humor, silken singing and incredible staying power. He worked past his 90th birthday last year and Polydor said he had planned to record a new album in 2008.

Innovation was a constant force in Salvador's long and varied life, which took him from France's South American enclave Guiana to Paris' most prestigious stages—and won the hearts of generations of French fans.

His honeyed voice appeared to defy the passage of time, remaining smooth and supple until the end. Salvador chalked it up to his technique.

"I don't sing, I whisper," he told The Associated Press in a 2006 interview. "When you whisper into the mike, you are able to transmit real feeling."

Whether he was singing jazz, blues, rock 'n' roll or chanson francaise—traditional French pop—feeling was the key ingredient in Salvador's prolific and varied music.

Salvador was born July 18, 1917, in French Guiana into a middle-class family. His father, a municipal tax collector of Spanish descent, and his mother, a Caribbean Indian, both came from the French Caribbean island of Guadeloupe.

The family moved to Paris when Salvador was 7.

He said a cousin played him records by Duke Ellington and Louis Armstong and, "I fell in love with their music." ... "At age 12, I found my calling."

Salvador persuaded his father to buy him his first guitar and he taught himself to play, practicing, he said, "17 or 18 hours a day, until my fingers bled."

The effort paid off when he auditioned for his first gig at 17.

"The head of the orchestra was blown away," Salvador said. "He asked me, 'Where did you come from?' and I told him, 'From my room.'"

Salvador would play in orchestras for more than a decade—he toured South America with famed French bandleader Ray Ventura—before striking out on his solo career in 1946, as France emerged from World War II.

AP

French singer Henri Salvador performs during the annual "Victoires de la Musiques" music awards, in this March 5, 2005 file photo.

A performer of mythic proportions in France, Salvador was also a star in Latin America—particularly in Brazil, where he was often credited with inventing bossa nova.

Salvador rejected that claim, insisting the late Brazilian jazzman Antonio Carlos Jobim invented the style. Still, he acknowledged Jobim struck on the concept behind bossa nova—slowing down samba's frenetic tempo—while listening to the classic Salvador number "Dans Mon Isle."

"When I recorded that little tune, holed up in my apartment in Paris, I could never have imagined it would change musical history," said Salvador. "For me, it was an extraordinary stroke of luck—and a great honor."

In the early 1950s, Salvador teamed up with two people who would mark his career, songwriter Boris Vian and Jacqueline Garabedian, who became his impresario and second wife.

With Vian, Salvador collaborated on more than 400 songs that ran the gamut of styles, from blues to French Caribbean beguines. The duo is also credited with importing rock 'n' roll to France, with the hit "Rock and roll mops."

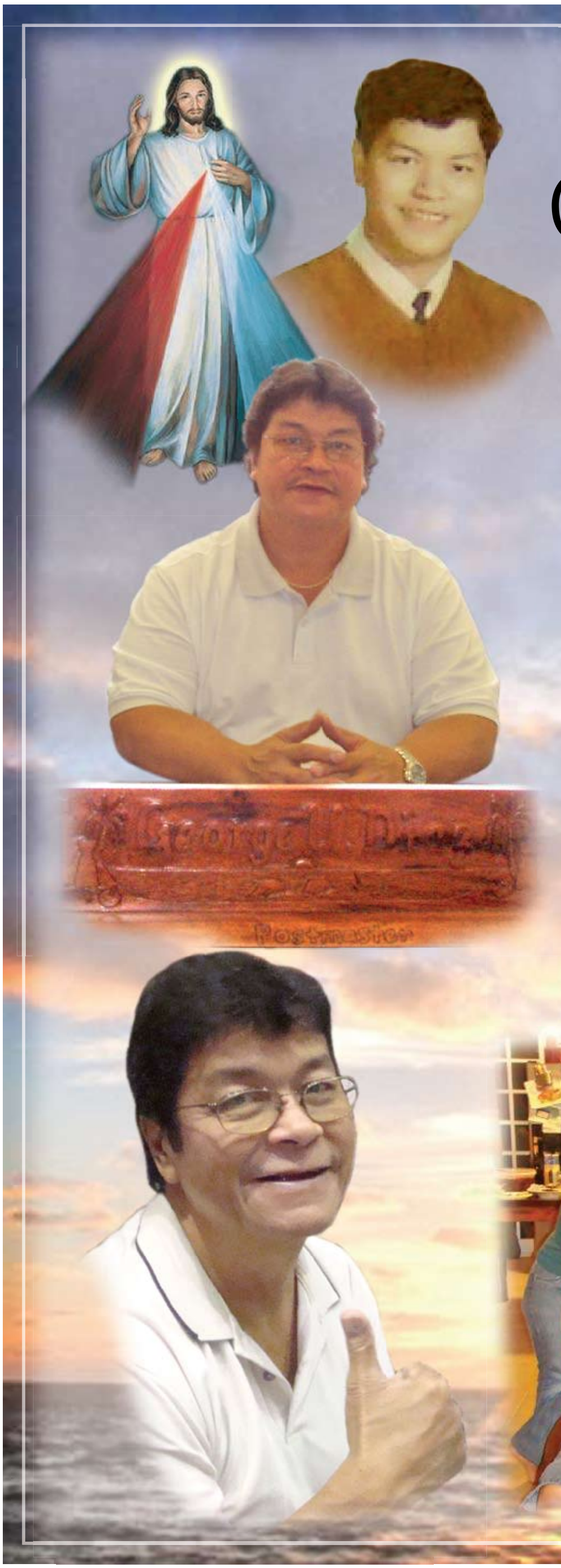
Garabedian, who died in 1976, was a driving force behind Salvador's stardom. A savvy businesswoman, she understood the power of television and pushed her husband to embrace it. Salvador was among the first singers to set his songs to televised images, prompting some in France to call him the father of the music video.

In the 1970s, Salvador expanded his fan base with a series of children's albums that included the French-language soundtracks of Disney's "The Aristocats" and "Robin Hood."

Over the following decades, he continued to tour and churned out so many albums he said he had lost count of them.

Still, Salvador insisted he didn't worry about going down in musical history.

"I don't care a bit about that," he said. "When we disappear, the world still keeps turning. We are nothing."



*In Loving Memory*

# George Untalan Diaz

**October 8, 1950 • February 12, 2008**

Familian Gayegu
from Barrigada, Guam was called home by God at the age 57.

**In his passing, George now joins his Parents**: Jose Diaz Diaz and Tomasa Adriano Untalan Diaz; and **Parents-in-law**: Francisco Duenas Flores and Maria Asuncion Romana Ada Torres Flores; **Brother-in-law**: Felix Manuel Torres Flores.

**George will be held in loving memory by his loving wife of 36 years**: **Evelyn** Torres Flores Diaz; **Children and Family**: **Geolyn** D. and Neil Egurrola, children Camarin Teresa, Maria Teresa, Jose Ignacio, Francisco Ignacio; **George Jr.** and Therese Diaz, children, Jarrod Ray, Geon Tristen, Jonah Keoki; **Joseph** F. Diaz, son David John; **Jeremiah** F. Diaz; **Geraldine** F. Diaz; **Jude** F. Diaz; **Sisters and Spouse**: Emiliana D. and David Paulino; Alfonsina D. and Roque Cruz; Maria U. Diaz; Elizabeth D. and Joe Rosario; **Brothers/Sisters-in-law**: Francisco and Ana Flores; Catherine F. and Crispin DeLeon Guerrero; John and Ladonna Flores; Joseph and Alva Flores; Margaret Flores; Donald and Shirlina Flores; Rosie and Juan Takai; and **numerous cousins (whom he calls sisters and brothers), nephews, nieces & friends.**

Mass is being said daily at 6:00 am, followed by evening rosary at 7:00 pm at Mount Carmel Cathedral in Chalan Kanoa.

Last respects will be held on Monday, February 18th, at Mount Carmel Cathedral in Chalan Kanoa beginning at 9:00 am. Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 1:00 pm after which he will be laid to rest at the Mount Carmel Cemetery in Chalan Kanoa.

# Free business book is Web sensation

**NEW YORK** (AP)—The Oprah touch doesn't just work for traditional books. More than 1 million copies of Suze Orman's "Women & Money" were downloaded after the announcement last week on Winfrey's television show that the e-book edition would be available for free on her Web site, http://www.oprah.com, for a period of 33 hours.

"I believe `Women & Money' is the most important book I've ever written," Orman said in a statement released Saturday by Winfrey. "So this was not about getting people to buy the book, but getting them to read it, and that was the intention behind this offer."

The download offer "has built excitement for Suze's book across all formats," Julie Grau, the book's publisher, said in a statement.

According to Saturday's statement from Winfrey, more than 1.1 million copies of Orman's financial advice book were downloaded in English, and another 19,000 in Spanish. The demand compares to such free online sensations as "The 9-11 Commission Report," which the federal government made available for downloads, and Stephen King's e-novella, "Riding the Bullet."

The publishing community has endlessly debated the effects of making text available online, with some saying that free downloading is a valuable promotional tool and others worrying that sales for paper editions would be harmed. The Authors Guild and the Association of American Publishers each have sued Google for its plans to scan and index books for the Internet.

The offer for "Women & Money," originally released a year ago by Spiegel & Grau, a division of Random House, Inc., has not kept people from buying the traditional version. As of Saturday, the book ranked No. 6 on Amazon.com. The paper edition of "The 9-11 Commission Report," published in 2004 by W.W. Norton and Co., was a best seller for months.

"I can tell you that with respect to the `9-11 Report,' the free download did not seem to hurt sales at all," Norton publisher Drake McFeely told The Associated Press on Saturday. "There were people who wanted it quickly, in a less convenient form, and that was clearly a different market from the people who wanted the traditional book."

He said free downloading of books does concern publishers, but "if Norton had been given the opportunity for an Oprah Winfrey plug, and part of the deal was making the book free online, we would have gladly taken it."

AP

Financial guru Suze Orman watches an outdoor concert of the "Today" show in New York's Rockefeller Center, in this May 31, 2007 file photo.

# Singer, 104, takes stage amid protests

**AMSTERDAM, Netherlands** (AP)—Several dozen people protested outside a theater Saturday where a 104-year-old singer who once performed for Adolf Hitler took the stage in the Netherlands for the first time in four decades.

Johannes Heesters was never accused of being a propagandist or anything other than an actor who was willing to perform for the Nazis, and the Allies allowed him to continue his career after the war. But in his native country he is viewed by some as irredeemable.

"He kept singing for the Nazi regime, for the Wehrmacht, and he earned millions," said Piet Schouten, representative of a committee formed to protest Heesters' performance at De Flint theater in Amersfoort.

"Those are facts and we have a problem with that on behalf of all the victims" he told national broadcaster NOS.

In 1964, Heesters was booed off the stage in Amsterdam when he tried to appear as Nazi-hating Captain von Trapp in "The Sound of Music."

No disturbances were reported during Saturday's concert in Amersfoort, where Heesters was born in 1903.

Johannes Heesters, performs at the De Flint theater in Amersfoort, Netherlands, Saturday, Feb. 16, 2008, marking the first time the 104-year-old singer who performed for Hitler, has taken to the stage in his native country in four decades.

AP

Heesters, who lives in Germany, has been a popular figure in German-language cabaret since the 1930s. On Saturday, he performed "The Merry Widow," the German song that made him famous, and "There by the Windmill," a Dutch classic, among others. At times he asked his wife, on stage with him, to remind him of lines but his voice was steady.

Around 50 demonstrators gathered outside. A handful of neo-Nazis also turned up—uninvited—to support Heesters, and several were detained by police after throwing eggs at the demonstrators.

Concertgoers were forced to submit copies of their passports and undergo airport-style security scans before being allowed to enter the theater, which seats 800.

Many of Heesters' critics focus on a visit his theater company made to Dachau in 1941. He had never disclosed the visit, but it became known when photos of him with Nazi soldiers were published in 1978.

One of the protesters carried a banner reading "my grandfather was in Dachau too."

Heesters says he didn't perform for the soldiers and didn't know about conditions at the concentration camp.

After the war "I was ashamed of myself and I still haven't stopped feeling this way," Heesters wrote in his autobiography. "I am angry with myself for being gullible, credulous and naive."

In an editorial, Dutch newspaper Trouw wrote Saturday that "the stain will always remain, but Heesters is welcome home in the Netherlands - it's nice that he's appearing here 104 years after his birth."

"It's all too easy for people today, most of whom grew up after the war, to pass judgment on the collaborators then," the paper wrote. "What would we do under comparable circumstances?"

# Prince, Village People to sue file-sharing site Pirate Bay

**STOCKHOLM, Sweden** (AP)—Prince and the Village People are planning to sue the Swedish file-sharing site The Pirate Bay for millions of dollars for helping people download their music online, a lawyer working on the case said Friday.

The artists are planning lawsuits both in the U.S. and in Sweden, said Lars Sandberg, a lawyer assigned to work on the Swedish side of the case.

"Work has been initiated to claim damages from those who are behind The Pirate Bay," Sandberg told The Associated Press. He confirmed reports in Swedish media that the artists would seek damages of millions of dollars.

Swedish authorities have ramped up the pressure on The Pirate Bay, a site used by an estimated 10 million to 15 million users around the world to share films, music and other copyright-protected material.

Four Swedes accused of being the organizers of the site were charged last month with helping others break Swedish copyright law.

Plaintiffs in that case include Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc., MGM Pictures Inc., Colombia Pictures Industries Inc., 20th Century Fox Films Co., Sony BMG, Universal and EMI. They have until Feb. 29 to file claims for damages.

Sandberg said the details of that investigation could be of interest to his own work.

Sandberg said he had been appointed in September to work on the case by Web Sheriff, a Britain-based anti-piracy group that he said represents Prince and the Village People. He declined to say when the lawsuits would be filed.

Swedish online business daily e24 quoted Web Sheriff Chief Executive John Giacobbi as saying that other performers could join the lawsuits, including Van Morrison and Chet Baker. Giacobbi did not immediately return calls seeking comment.

According to e24, Prince is seeking damages for illegal downloads of about 40 albums, while The Village People wants compensation for illegal downloads of its 1970s megahit "YMCA."

# Exhibit stops using bodies from China

**NEW YORK** (AP)—The doctor behind the "Body Worlds" exhibits that show cadavers in different poses says he has stopped using bodies from China for fear that some of them may be executed prisoners, ABC News reported on Friday.

Dr. Gunther von Hagens told ABC's "20/20" that he had to destroy some bodies he had received from China because they had injuries that made him suspect they were execution victims.

The doctor invented a liquid plastic process that preserves bodies. He has put many of them on display in museum exhibits that show them in poses like playing poker or throwing a football.

One such exhibit opened Jan. 18 at the Milwaukee Public Museum and has had 100,000 paid visitors so far, Dan Finley, president of the nonprofit company that operates the museum, told The Associated Press.

"It's the biggest exhibition we've ever done," he said. "The best attended."

Finley said every specimen in his exhibit was there with informed consent. He said it was his understanding that 8,000 people have volunteered to have their bodies—which are skinned for the exhibit - used in future "Body Worlds" shows.

Meanwhile, the company that is running a similar exhibit nationwide called "Bodies ... Revealed" is under investigation by New York Attorney General Andrew Cuomo, to determine where the bodies and body parts came from. Cuomo spokesman Steven Cohen confirms that subpoenas have been issued to the company but the office has drawn no conclusions.

The exhibit by Premier Exhibitions Inc. of Atlanta is now in Cincinnati.

A Premier spokeswoman didn't immediately respond to a request for comment. Premier Exhibitions told ABC News it would cooperate fully.

# Perry Lopez, veteran actor in iconic films and TV shows, dies

**BEVERLY HILLS, California** (AP)—Perry Lopez, a veteran film and television actor whose career ranged from roles in "Chinatown" to "Star Trek" has died. He was 78.

Lopez died Thursday of lung cancer at The Rehabilitation Centre of Beverly Hills, said actor James Victor, Lopez's executor and friend.

Born in New York, Lopez got his start on the stage before moving into film with an uncredited role in "The Creature from the Black Lagoon." He went on to appear in dozens of iconic movies and TV shows, including "The Lone Ranger," "Bonanza," "Charlie's Angels," "Mission: Impossible" and "Star Trek."

He starred opposite Jack Nicholson and Faye Dunaway as Lt. Lou Escobar in the 1974 classic "Chinatown." Lopez reprised the role in the 1990 sequel, "The Two Jakes," which featured Nicholson as director and star.

During his 40-year career, Lopez shared the screen with Jack Palance, Clint Eastwood, Omar Sharif, Barbara Eden, Elvis Presley and John Wayne.

# Carpenters fans try to save former home

**DOWNEY, Calif.** (AP)—Owners of The Carpenters' former home aren't feeling on top of the world about the legions of fans who keep stopping by to pay tribute.

The five-bedroom tract house, where siblings Karen and Richard Carpenter lived and penned some of their greatest hits, was featured on the cover of their 1973 hit album "Now & Then." It was also where an anorexic Karen Carpenter collapsed in 1983 before dying.

Owners Manuel and Blanca Melendez Parra have apparently grown weary of the parade of fans paying homage.

The couple have submitted plans to officials in Downey, a city about 15 miles south of downtown Los Angeles, to raze the 39-year-old main house, the Los Angeles Times reported Saturday. The Parras have already torn down an adjoining house and have begun construction on a larger home.

The proposal to level the rest of the residence has angered fans.

"This house is our version of Graceland," said Carpenters aficionado Jon Konjoyan. "When they photographed the 'Now & Then' cover here in 1973, the house was instantly immortalized."

The 57-year-old musician and promoter is heading a campaign to save the original home from the wrecker's ball. Some fans have proposed that Downey officials declare the house a historic landmark.

AP

Karen and Richard Carpenter pose with their Grammys during the 14th annual 1971 Grammy Awards at New York's Felt Forum, in this March 14, 1972 file photo.

The entire Carpenter family lived in the main house. The adjoining section was used as an office, rehearsal studio and recreation room.

The Carpenters' parents lived in the residence until Harold Carpenter's death in 1988 and Agnes Carpenter's in 1996. Richard Carpenter sold the house a year later.

After the Parras bought the house, Jessica Parra, said that at first her parents invited fans into the home and gave away items left by Richard Carpenter.

"In the beginning, we let everybody in. But honestly, it became horrible, not only for us but for the neighborhood," Parra said. "People peek in windows and take pictures. They leave flowers on the front porch."

Downey officials said that they received plans for a new residence, but that no demolition permit has been issued.

Konjoyan is holding out hope. He wants the home to be bought and rehabilitated. If that is not possible, he wants the structure to be moved.

"They were such a huge American act in the '70s," Konjoyan said of the duo. "So many people loved them."

# 'The Elite Squad' wins Berlin film festival's top award

**BERLIN** (AP)—Director Jose Padilha's "Tropa de Elite" ("The Elite Squad,") a movie about police violence in Rio de Janeiro that caused controversy in Brazil, won the top Golden Bear award Saturday at the annual Berlin film festival.

The movie, about the shady workings of Rio's Special Operations Police Battalion, faced an attempt by Brazilian police to keep it out of theaters at the time of its release last year.

"Elite Squad" is not a documentary, but claims to tell the true stories of 12 former officers from the black-uniformed paramilitary unit whose very insignia—a dagger-impaled skull—strikes fear into residents of Rio's shanty towns.

The festival's jury grand prize, which comes with a runner-up Silver Bear, went to Oscar-winning U.S. director Errol Morris' "Standard Operating Procedure," a documentary on the scandal over prisoner abuse at the U.S.-run Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq.

Morris spent nearly two years pursuing interviews with soldiers involved in the notorious photos of abuse that emerged from the facility, combining them with re-enacted scenes.

Paul Thomas Anderson was named best director for strong Oscar contender "There Will Be Blood," starring Daniel Day-Lewis as an obsessed turn-of-the-century oil man, which had been many critics' favorite to win the top honors.

AP

Director Jose Padilha and actress Maria Ribeiro poses with the Golden Bear award for the best movie during the awarding ceremony at the 58th Berlinale International Film Festival in Berlin, Saturday, Feb. 16, 2008.

Anderson, who won the Golden Bear in 2000 for "Magnolia," paid tribute to Day-Lewis as "a terrific actor who makes any director a good director."

"There Will Be Blood" also took an award for outstanding artistic achievement, which went to Jonny Greenwood's musical score.

Sally Hawkins won the best actress prize for her part as a London teacher in British director Mike Leigh's "Happy-Go-Lucky." Leigh has said the movie is meant to celebrate the power of positive thinking, and Hawkins described it as "extraordinary, beautiful and very special film."

The best actor award went to Reza Naji for playing a long-suffering father in Iranian director Majid Majidi's "The Song of Sparrows." Naji plays Karim, who loses his job on an ostrich farm and then falls into working as a motorcycle taxi driver in Tehran as he struggles to make ends meet.

Chinese director Wang Xiaoshuai was credited with the best script for "In Love We Trust," while the prize for an innovative film went to "Lake Tahoe," directed by Fernando Eimbcke of Mexico.

The winners were chosen by a six-member international jury led by Constantin Costa-Gavras, the Greek-born director of "Z" and "Missing."

# HIT sells Guinness World Records to Jim Pattison Group

LONDON (AP)—Britain's HIT Entertainment Ltd., the producer of the "Bob the Builder" children's TV show, said Friday it sold Guinness World Records to The Jim Pattison Group. Financial details were not disclosed.

Guinness World Records is the recognized authority on record-breaking achievement. First published in 1955, Guinness World Records has developed its annual book into an international business published in more than 100 countries and 37 languages.

The Jim Pattison Group is Canada's third-largest private company with sales of over 6.3 billion Candadian dollars and over 29,000 employees. Its holdings include Ripley Entertainment Inc.

"No other enterprise collects, confirms, accredits and presents world record data with the same investment in comprehensiveness and authenticity," Jim Pattison Jr. was quoted as saying in a statement.

# Romantic feelings cloud best friends' relationship

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby

**DEAR ABBY:** I'm an 18-year-old girl. Romantic relationships have never meant much to me. It's fun to have someone to go to art galleries and coffee shops with, and to make out with in my car, but I don't have a need to tie myself down. I have had a lot of nice "flings" during high school, but it was high school, and it's time to move on.

My best friend of 11 years, "Mick," happens to be a boy. We decided in middle school that our relationship would be strictly platonic. Last night, Mick kissed me and told me he is in love with me. I don't feel the same. I'm not physically attracted to him. I tried to be nice and told Mick it would ruin our friendship, but he disagrees.

With any other guy, rejection is easy. But this is my best friend. Mick has low self-esteem when it comes to girls. If I say I'm not attracted to him, it'll hurt his feelings.

I feel stuck and angry. I told Mick the truth about how I felt a long time ago. Do I have to be mean to get my point across? Here's how I honestly feel: I love hanging out with him, but I find him repulsive-looking, and if he kisses me again he's getting slapped. I've never been mad at him before. Can you please help me?

"ASHLEY" IN CLEVELAND

**DEAR "ASHLEY": According to the letters I have received from men, most would prefer to be told the truth rather than be left hoping and dangling. You and Mick have different objectives. He wants romance; you want only friendship. It's time for you both to widen your circle of friends.**

**It isn't necessary to tell Mick that he's "repulsive" or that the next time he makes a move on you, you'll deck him. However, the sooner you tell him plainly that you consider him your best friend -- but nothing more -- and the "chemistry" isn't there for you, the better off you'll both be. Believe me, it's a lot kinder than stringing him along for company.**

■ ■ ■

**DEAR ABBY:** Please let me know the appropriate way to inform my family and friends that my wedding has been canceled. How many details do I have to provide? What if my fiance, who is a publicist, has posted a lengthy and one-sided account of what has happened?

FORMER BRIDE-TO-BE

**DEAR FORMER BRIDE-TO-BE: You do not have to provide any painful details to anyone. Write a short note to your family and friends. All you need to say is "Dear ( ), This is to inform you that 'John's' and my wedding has been canceled. Condolences are not in order -- it was by mutual consent. Love, ( )"**

**If your former fiance has actually had the bad taste to post an account of why the wedding is off, I cannot stress emphatically enough that he's no gentleman, and you're lucky to be rid of him. Do not sink to his level.**

■ ■ ■

**DEAR ABBY:** There seems to be an awful lot of women exposing themselves on the Internet in graphic sexual fashion. My wife says that men degrade themselves by looking at them.

My question to you is, what is more degrading? Looking at them, or women exposing themselves?

WONDERING IN PUYALLUP, WASH.

**DEAR WONDERING: For a woman to post graphic sexual images for people she doesn't know to view strikes me as more degrading because it indicates that she thinks she has little else to offer.**

**However, for a married man to view those images could also be considered degrading -- and threatening -- to his wife. Many women have written to me because their husbands spend more time looking at porn on the Internet than having a sex life in their own bedroom. In other words, the practice became an addiction.**

---

*Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.*

*Good advice for everyone – teens to seniors – is in "The Anger in All of Us and How to Deal With It." To order, send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby, Anger Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included.)*

# Pastimes

## Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

LOOK, I'LL TRANSMOGRIFY YOU BACK TO A TIGER IF YOU'LL TRANSMOGRIFY ME BACK TO A KID, OK?
OK.
ZAP
AHH, THAT'S MUCH BETTER.
NOW DO ME.
CLICK...CLICK...CLICK
WHAT'S WRONG?? I'M NOT TRANSMOG-RIFYING!
BOY, I'M GLAD WE DID ME FIRST.
2/18

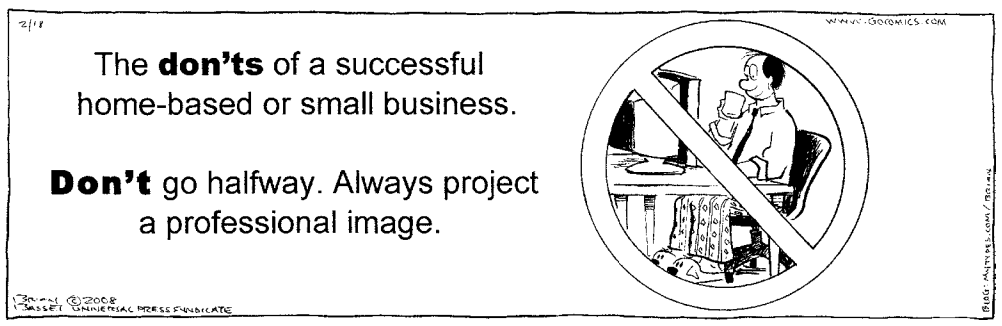
## Garfield®

By Jim Davis

PENNY FOR YOUR THOUGHTS
GARFIELD, I WAS THINKING... IF OUR EARS WERE IN OUR ARMPITS...
WOULD WE HAVE TO RAISE OUR ARMS TO HEAR PEOPLE TALK?
A DOLLAR IF YOU STOP THINKING
JIM DAVIS 2-18

## Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


2/18
WWW.GOCOMICS.COM
The don'ts of a successful home-based or small business.
Don't go halfway. Always project a professional image.

## The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy

## CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

**ACROSS**

1 Serpents
5 Was a trailblazer
8 Versifier
12 Foolproof
14 Erstwhile Montreal athlete
15 Information you don't want too soon
16 Check
17 Bow the head
18 Swoop (onto)
20 Threaded nail
23 Low voice
24 Angers
25 Working class?
28 Disencumber
29 One-named singer/dancer
30 Gorilla
32 Water heaters
34 Gratis
35 Unruly groups
36 Demolish
37 Shrimp recipe
40 Pi follower
41 Carte
42 Some poultry
47 Smell
48 Solon, for one
49 Hereditary bit
50 Type squares
51 Syndicate bigwig

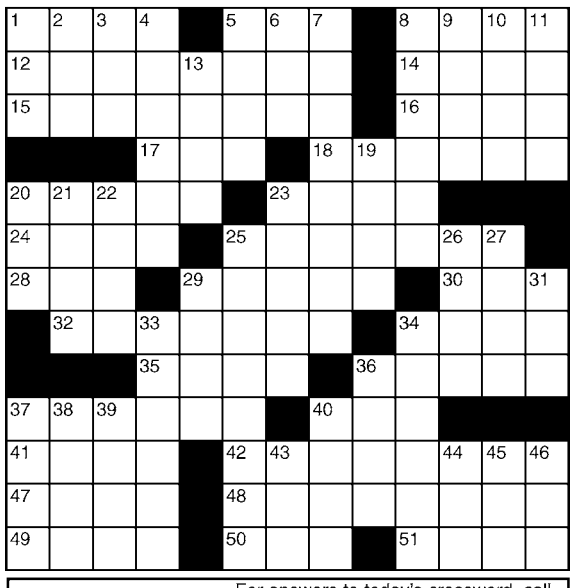
**DOWN**

1 Donkey
2 Dine
3 Expert
4 Fishing nets
5 Told a whopper
6 Blunder
7 Loses all hope
8 Read
9 The yoke's on them
10 Grand story
11 Coloration
13 Circulate
19 Norway's capital
20 Round Table address
21 Nursery bed
22 Start over
23 Piglets' papas
25 Scripture
26 Exceptional
27 Detail, for short
29 Hoofbeat sound
31 "A mouse!"
33 Entomb within a wall
34 Cavort
36 Millard Fillmore, for one
37 Urban blight
38 Relinquish
39 Soon, in verse
40 Tiers
43 Aries
44 Gabor or Mendes
45 Agent, briefly
46 "No seats" sign

**Solution time: 24 mins.**

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A | W | A | Y | ■ | A | D | D | S | ■ | Y | A | P |
| M | E | N | U | ■ | L | E | A | K | ■ | E | L | L |
| M | I | N | G | ■ | W | A | R | Y | ■ | T | O | O |
| O | R | E | O | ■ | A | R | T | ■ | V | I | E | W |
| ■ | ■ | ■ | S | P | Y | ■ | E | P | I | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| F | A | B | L | E | S | ■ | R | A | C | K | E | T |
| C | L | E | A | T | ■ | ■ | S | T | E | V | E | ■ |
| C | L | E | V | E | R | ■ | S | T | O | W | E | D |
| ■ | ■ | ■ | I | R | A | ■ | P | A | R | ■ | ■ | ■ |
| J | A | V | A | ■ | I | L | L | ■ | H | O | B | O |
| U | S | A | ■ | A | S | E | A | ■ | U | N | I | T |
| G | I | S | ■ | D | I | E | S | ■ | G | E | L | T |
| S | A | T | ■ | A | N | K | H | ■ | O | S | L | O |

Saturday's answer 2-18



**STUMPED?** For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

**CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY**: Molly Ringwald, 40; Dr. Dre, 43; Matt Dillon, 44; John Travolta, 54

**Happy Birthday**: By taking the initiative and being positive this year, you will progress but, if you let jealousy or your temper take over, you will lose ground. Relationships and partnerships will be an integral part of your personal and professional life. Fair and just action will bring the best results. Your numbers are 9, 14, 22, 27, 42, 49

**ARIES** (*March 21-April 19*): If you slip up today, you will be criticized for your mistakes. Love and extending help to children, those in need or someone you want to get to know better, will help you realize a new purpose. Take action, speak your mind and go the distance. ✪✪

**TAURUS** (*April 20-May 20*): Keep trusted friends close by and secrets from acquaintances who may use information against you. An opportunity to travel or find out valuable information will give you the edge. Emotions and spending won't mix well. ✪✪✪✪

**GEMINI** (*May 21-June 20*): Take on whatever comes your way with enthusiasm and you will draw the attention and help you need to be successful. A new position, responsibility or project will take off quickly and keep you on your toes. Money must be saved, not squandered. ✪✪✪

**CANCER** (*June 21-July 22*): You'll find it difficult to control your emotions but, if you concentrate on an interesting job adding special detail to your work, you will prosper in the end. Someone you love may overreact, causing some troubles within a partnership. ✪✪✪

**LEO** (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Your world may appear to be turning upside down today. Don't take chances when it comes to love or dealing with business partners. Listen but don't share your point of view just yet. ✪✪✪

**VIRGO** (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Anger and impatience will lead to trouble but throwing yourself into your work and doing a good job will help open a passageway to something you have wanted for a long time. Love will develop through socializing or getting involved in a new hobby or activity. ✪✪✪

**LIBRA** (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): You can make things happen today so don't let laziness stand in the way of your progress. Travel should be in the works whether for business, education or just plain pleasure. You can make personal changes with confidence. ✪✪✪✪

**SCORPIO** (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Go into hiding if you want to avoid controversy. Put your effort into building something or renovating or even going over your investments. Don't interact with anyone who is likely to pick a fight or cause you grief. Work by yourself. ✪✪

**SAGITTARIUS** (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Your past actions will be responsible for the losses you're experiencing now and you can expect the people you dealt with to take action. A change in your location or getting involved with someone new will help you move in a new direction. ✪✪✪

**CAPRICORN** (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Take on something new. Your emotions may confuse you a little but, if you rely on your experience and knowledge, you will come out on top. Doing things a little differently will surprise the people around you. ✪✪✪

**AQUARIUS** (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): You'll be tempted to change the way you do things, jumping from one job to another. Don't deny yourself the opportunity to do something creative, challenging or unlike what you would normally do. You will learn through new adventures. ✪✪✪

**PISCES** (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Take the opportunity to do something that will enhance your mind, your looks or your physical body. The more pressure put on you by others, the more you will want to fight back. Don't get caught up in emotional madness when passion should be the focus. ✪✪✪✪✪

**Birthday Baby**: You are an opportunist, seeing possibilities and envisioning results. You are a doer and explorer and are creative in your pursuits.

*Eugenia's Web sites:* ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun,* ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations*

## EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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## SUDOKU

**Conceptis Sudoku** *By Dave Green*

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | 6 | | | | | | 1 | 5 |
| | | | 7 | | 5 | | | |
| 1 | 7 | | | | | | 8 | 2 |
| | 1 | | | 7 | | | 2 | |
| 7 | | 2 | 4 | 8 | 6 | 5 | | 1 |
| | 4 | | | 3 | | | 7 | |
| 9 | 2 | | | | | | 5 | 4 |
| | | | 3 | | 2 | | | |
| 6 | 3 | | | | | | 9 | 8 |

Difficulty Level ★ 2/18

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

**Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer**

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | 7 | 4 | 8 | 3 | 5 | 9 | 2 | 1 |
| 9 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 4 | 8 | 7 | 6 |
| 2 | 1 | 8 | 9 | 6 | 7 | 5 | 4 | 3 |
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| 7 | 4 | 6 | 1 | 8 | 3 | 2 | 9 | 5 |
| 1 | 2 | 9 | 7 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 8 |
| 4 | 9 | 1 | 3 | 7 | 8 | 6 | 5 | 2 |
| 8 | 6 | 7 | 5 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 9 |
| 5 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 9 | 1 | 7 | 8 | 4 |

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 2/16

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## WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

**HOW TO PLAY:** All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

GALVANIZED STEEL — **Solution: 6 letters**

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| N | I | T | H | O | M | D | I | O | X | I | D | E | T | T |
| T | R | T | H | E | G | R | E | M | B | U | S | C | E | E |
| E | O | E | T | G | N | H | C | T | A | B | E | M | C | C |
| E | N | S | T | E | I | S | S | S | L | T | P | A | H | O |
| H | Y | C | T | T | T | E | M | T | O | E | F | E | N | M |
| S | U | L | C | R | A | A | W | R | R | R | M | L | I | P |
| D | O | A | O | L | E | P | P | A | U | I | E | C | Q | O |
| M | E | N | L | B | H | E | T | S | C | N | P | Y | U | N |
| R | G | O | U | E | E | U | E | A | A | E | C | C | E | E |
| O | Y | I | T | L | R | C | L | P | R | G | N | E | S | N |
| O | L | A | I | (E) | A | U | B | F | B | Y | I | R | L | T |
| D | G | N | (R) | R | K | Y | T | O | O | X | Z | L | I | S |
| T | G | (U) | B | D | U | A | E | X | N | O | U | L | A | I |
| U | (P) | S | D | U | T | S | L | R | I | D | R | O | N | P |
| O | P | R | E | V | E | N | T | F | S | M | E | R | I | W |

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Alloy, Batch, Beams, Bond, Braces, Build, Carbon, Chemical, Components, Dioxide, Duct, Dull, Flake, Gate, Heating, Iron, Layers, Melted, Mixture, Molten, Nails, Outdoor, Oxygen, Panel, Pattern, Peeling, Prevent, Protect, Pure, React, Recycle, Roll, Roof, Rust, Sheet, Strip, Strong, Studs, Submerge, Surface, System, Technique, Temperature, Weight, Wire, Zinc

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| | |
|---|---|
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| • Succeeding positions | $1 |

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| | |
|---|---|
| • 1st position | $13 |
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| | |
|---|---|
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# Howard soars in spectacular dunk contest

**NEW ORLEANS** (AP)—Look, up in the sky! It's a bird. It's a plane. It's Dwight Howard—super slam dunk champion. A red cape trailing behind him, Orlando's man of steel made like Superman and won perhaps the best dunk contest, definitely the most creative, in NBA history to close a memorable All-Star Saturday.

Using a variety of props as well as teammate Jameer Nelson, Howard scored perfect 50s from judges on his first two dunks before the contest was turned over to fan voting for the first time in the final round.

Fans, too, picked the 6-foot-11 Howard, who dispelled an old dunking myth: Big men can fly high.

"It's really for the big men," Howard said. "Everybody always says, big men can't jump and big men don't look good dunking. I just tried to add a little bit of my personality. With me being so tall, I knew it was going to be tough. I tried to play to the crowd and have fun."

In any other year, Minnesota's Gerald Green would have easily walked away with his second straight dunking crown, but he was upstaged by the amazingly athletic Howard, whose performance has to rank up there with anything Michael Jordan, Kobe Bryant, Vince Carter or even tiny Spud Webb ever did above the basket.

The dunk contest, bland for so many years as the game's high risers seemed to run out of ideas, was freshened up by some of the most creative aerial assaults in memory.

Howard, Green, Toronto's Jamario Moon and Memphis' Rudy Gay all used tape, ladders, teammates and even a tasty dessert to show their stuff.

"I think the dunk contest is back," said Howard, who was disappointed when he failed to make it out of the first round last year. "I don't think people want to see the same old dunks. They want to see something else, see some spice."

Howard started things off with a dunk he has been practicing for two years. Standing on the baseline, he tossed the ball off the reverse side of the backboard, caught it with both hands, and after peering through the glass at the rim, dunked left-handed.

The crowd roared and a celebrity panel of judges including Magic Johnson, Karl Malone as well as Dominique Wilkins, Julius Erving and Darryl Dawkins—three of the game's most famed dunkers—all gave him perfect 10s.

Not to be outdone, Green tried to blow the field away. Literally.

After Timberwolves teammate Rashad McCants climbed up and placed a cupcake with a single candle in it on the back of the rim, Green soared in and puffed out the flame before throwing down a nasty left-hander.

"At first I thought he was going to take the cupcake, eat it and then dunk it," Howard said. "I thought he would have won with that."

In the second round, McCants sat on the top step of the ladder and handed the ball off to a rising Green, who crushed another dunk.

That's when Howard stripped off his blue Magic jersey to reveal an "S" on his chest. As the crowd stood, he tied the cape around his massive shoulders.

"I didn't have time to get the telephone booth," he quipped.

Nelson placed a piece of tape to mark Howard's take-off spot, and after a running start from near mid-court, the Magic's main man took off just inside the free-throw line and fired down the ball with authority.

In the final round, Green performed two acrobatic dunks, one in only green socks after removing his sneakers. But neither of those could top Howard's last two efforts.

First, Howard bounced the ball off the floor, tapped it left-handed off the backboard and dunked with his right hand. For Howard's finale, Nelson affixed a miniature Orlando backboard next to the rim and balanced a ball on it.

Howard flew in from the right side, picked the ball off cleanly and slammed it in. He then only had to wait for fans to text message a result that seemed to be a no-brainer. Howard won in a landslide, receiving 78 percent of the vote.

Earlier, Jason Kapono showed nobody's close to him from long distance.

The NBA's best 3-point shooter this season, the Toronto forward with the silky touch won his second straight 3-point Shootout, tying a 22-year-old record with a final round of 25.

Kapono missed his first two shots in the last round before dropping 10 straight. By the time he approached the last rack of balls, Kapono had already clinched the win and didn't have to fire up another shot.

But he knocked down a few more anyway, matching three-time winner Craig Hodges' mark of 25 set in 1986. When his final shot swished through, Kapono, who made all five money balls—worth two points apiece—and went 20-for-25 in the last round, slapped high-fives with other All-Stars and hugged Raptors teammate Chris Bosh.

Kapono wasn't sure what he'll do with his second shiny trophy.

"I'm thinking in the bathroom or something," he said. "Maybe every time I take a shower or I go in and brush my teeth I'll start my day out staring at this beautiful trophy."

Cleveland's Daniel Gibson, who made 11 3-pointers in Friday night's rookie challenge finished second. He scored 17 points in the final round, finishing three points ahead of Dallas' Dirk Nowitzki, who replaced the injured Bryant.

Kapono almost didn't get out of the first round. He was in danger of elimination as he approached the last rack but came through in the clutch by sinking five straight shots to advance.

In the Skills Challenge, Utah's Deron Williams was flawless and fast.

With a nearly perfect run through an obstacle course of dribbling, passing and shooting, the Jazz point guard defeated New Orleans playmaker Chris Paul in the final round.

Williams blazed up, down and around the floor of the New Orleans Arena in 25.5 seconds, a new record for the six-year-old event. Cheered on by his home crowd, Paul, who completed the circuit in 29.9 seconds in the first round, finished in 31.2 seconds for second place.

In the night's first event, San Antonio's Becky Hammon, David Robinson and Tim Duncan won the Shooting Stars competition. It featured three-person teams consisting of an NBA player, a WNBA player and a former NBA great from the same city. Contestants had to make six shots with the final one a heave from mid-court.

AP

Wearing a Superman costume Orlando Magic's Dwight Howard flies toward the basket during the basketball slam dunk contest Saturday, Feb. 16, 2008, at the NBA All Star Weekend in New Orleans.

# *Hawks hoping Bibby can help playoff push*

**ATLANTA** (AP)—The Atlanta Hawks are trying balance out their backcourt and make a playoff push by bringing in Mike Bibby. Hawks coach Mike Woodson said Bibby, acquired from the Sacramento Kings for four players on Saturday, will provide scoring help for Joe Johnson.

Atlanta's All-Star shooting guard often faces gimmick defenses because he's the team's only outside shooting threat.

"There's another option now," Woodson said. "It'll be like a one-two punch in the backcourt."

Bibby has averaged 16.7 points for his career and is making more than 36 percent of his 3-point shots for the ninth straight year.

The Hawks sent starting point guard Anthony Johnson, 2007 first-round pick Shelden Williams, backup point guard Tyronn Lue, veteran forward Lorenzen Wright and a 2008 second-round pick to the Kings.

The Hawks, in ninth place in the Eastern Conference and percentage points behind the eighth and final playoff spot, are trying to make the postseason for the first time since 1999.

Woodson and Michael Gearon Jr., one of the team's owners, were pleased the team did not have to touch its core of promising young players to acquire Bibby.

"We've still got Marvin (Williams) and Josh Smith and Josh Childress; we were able to keep the core group together, along with Al Horford and Zaza (Pachulia)," Woodson said.

The trade is pending league approval and physicals.

Hawks spokesman Arthur Triche said Bibby is expected to join the team in Los Angeles on Monday, where he will have his physical. The Hawks play at the Lakers on Tuesday night and play at the Kings on Wednesday night.

Bibby, a 10-year veteran, missed the start of the season with a thumb injury but is averaging 13.5 points and 5.0 assists in 15 games.

"I want to thank Mike for his terrific all-around play," Kings president Geoff Petrie said in a statement. "He's had a great run here as a King and has participated in and contributed to some great moments on the court and I wish him all the best."

With Bibby gone, the Kings have cut almost all ties to their highly successful teams of the early part of this decade.

Bibby came to the Kings from the Vancouver Grizzlies in a trade before the 2001-02 season and helped Sacramento reach the Western Conference finals that season, establishing himself as a go-to-guy late in games.

With Bibby, Chris Webber, Peja Stojakovic and Vlade Divac, coach Rick Adelman's Kings were one of the best and most entertaining teams in the NBA for five seasons, but they never reached the .

Now the Kings are in the midst of a major rebuilding project. They're 23-28 at the All-Star break and have no need for a 29-year-old point guard.

Gearon said his team's new backcourt of Bibby and Joe Johnson "will be as good as any in the East."

"I think Bibby will be one of the top three point guards in the East," Gearon said.

"He's capable of going one-on-one, hitting clutch shots, breaking defenses and leading this team."

Bibby is making about $13.5 million this season and will earn $14 million in 2008-09.

"From our standpoint it's a big commitment financially and one we feel good about," Gearon said. "We've got a guy to take a lot of pressure off Joe, and he's a leader. We're excited about getting him in a Hawks uniform."

By trading Anthony Johnson and Lue, the Hawks also are committing to rookie point guard Acie Law, who should receive more consistent playing time as Bibby's backup.

"I think it's a good move or us to get a guy who's run a team for many years," said Woodson of Bibby. "It's an opportunity to start fresh in Atlanta, for a different team, and put a stamp on our team."

Also on Saturday, the Kings requested waivers on forward Justin Williams and guard Dahntay Jones.

Shelden Williams averaged 5.5 points and 5.4 rebounds, with eight double-doubles, as a rookie, when he started 31 games. He has no starts while averaging only 2.9 points and 2.9 rebounds this season.

Williams has another year remaining on his rookie deal that is paying him $3.3 million per year. The contracts for Anthony Johnson, Lue and Wright expire at the end of the season.

"We're excited about adding another young frontcourt player who was the fifth pick of the 2006 draft in Williams, along with some experienced veterans to the team," Petrie said. "We're looking forward to seeing how they integrate in with the rest of our roster."

# Mickelson holds Northern Trust Open lead

**LOS ANGELES** (AP)—Phil Mickelson learned as junior golfer to never underestimate anyone, no matter the size of his lead or the pedigree of his opponent.

And while the odds of Lefty finally winning in L.A. looked good as ever Saturday at the Northern Trust, where he shot a 1-under 70 for a one-shot lead over Jeff Quinney, two holes showed how much work remains to add Riviera to his West Coast collection of trophies.

One came at the fabled par-3 sixth, where Quinney hit a 7-iron that he thought was headed for the bunker in the middle of the green, only to land just to the right and roll back into the cup for an ace. The other came at the end of the third round when Quinney holed a 35-foot birdie putt to close the margin to one stroke.

"If the guy is good enough to be in the last group, he's obviously playing well enough to win," Mickelson said. "I know that I won't be handed anything tomorrow. I know how well Jeff is playing. And I know that there are guys that are right there and can shoot a low round tomorrow. It's my job to go out and hit solid shots."

Mickelson was at 11-under 202, and Quinney might be the only guy he has to worry about.

John Rollins lost momentum with consecutive bogeys and shot 69, leaving him five shots behind. Scott Verplank overcame a four-putt from 30 feet on the fringe at the par-5 first for a 71 that put him at 208, along with Stuart Appleby (69) and Vaughn Taylor (71).

A year ago, Mickelson had a one-shot lead over Padraig Harrington with five experienced players separated by only three shots. He wound up losing in a playoff to Charles Howell III.

"I like it better this time," Mickelson said.

And well he should.

Mickelson has 32 career victories, 15 of those coming in every West Coast Swing city but Los Angeles. He is 18-7 when he has at least a share of the lead going into the final round.

"Other than Tiger, he's probably the next best frontrunner," Verplank said. "He's awful good."

Quinney, a former U.S. Amateur champion who took five years to reach the PGA Tour, has held the 54-hole lead only once, last year in Phoenix, and bogeyed the last two holes to finish third.

"He's going to bring a lot to the table," Quinney said. "I have to bring my best to the table."

Quinney did not sound the least bit concerned about a four-shot deficit to Mickelson, saying after his second round that Riviera is not the type of course where one has to shoot 64 to make up ground.

Then, he looked as though he might do just that.

Quinney birdied the first hole with a long chip across the green on the par 5, then gained another shot when Lefty three-putted for bogey on No. 4. Quinney then holed a 20-foot birdie putt to reduce the lead to one-shot going into the sixth hole.

Then came an ace that he heard, but never really saw.

With a 7-iron from 163 yards, the ball landed to the edge of the bunker and trickled down toward the cup. Quinney couldn't see because of the haze, but figured he was in decent safe and walked away from the tee. He looked over his left shoulder one last time, and his eyes grew wide when he heard an enormous cheer from the hill around the green.

He ran toward his caddie, unsure whether to hug or high-five, and it turned out to be a clumsy celebration.

"We need to get that organized," he said.

That gave him the lead, but only for as long as Mickelson hit 8-iron to 5 feet and made birdie, putting both at 10 under.

"I thought that was as good of a response as I could have expected," Mickelson said. "I thought that was a big 2 for me."

They matched birdies at No. 10—Quinney with a wedge to 2 feet, Mickelson by driving to the front of the green—and neither showed signs of backing down. But everything changed with one swing.

Mickelson was on the par-5 11th green in two, Quinney just short of the bunker. Quinney caught two much ball, however, and it sailed over the green. He chipped back to 15 feet and did well to escape with bogey.

But it was a two-shot swing after Mickelson two-putted for birdie, and Quinney spent the rest of the back nine trying to catch up. Mickelson saved par with a 10-foot putt on No. 15, then made par from about 6 feet on the final hole to keep his lead.

It wasn't a big lead, not nearly as big as Mickelson wanted. But it was good enough for him.

"Tomorrow we'll go head-to-head, and if I can just tie him, tie goes to me," Mickelson said. "So that's the nice thing about having a shot in hand."

AP

Phil Mickelson watches a shot on the fourth hole in the third round of the Northern Trust Open golf tournament at Riviera Country Club in the Pacific Palisades area of Los Angeles Saturday, Feb. 16, 2008.

# Memphis survives scare to remain perfect

**BIRMINGHAM, Ala.** (AP)—Chris Douglas-Roberts converted a three-point play with 6.5 seconds left, giving No. 1 Memphis a 79-78 win over UAB Saturday night and keeping the Tigers perfect.

The Blazers' Robert Vaden then missed badly on an off-balance 3-point attempt and Lawrence Kinnard grabbed the long rebound. He heaved up a shot in the paint that went in, and officials promptly headed to the scorer's table to watch replays.

They ruled that Kinnard didn't get the shot off in time.

Several Memphis players had angry exchanges with UAB fans who stormed the court celebrating what they thought was a win. Then the Tigers (25-0, 11-0 Conference USA) were quickly herded to their locker room with their 44-game regular-season and 34-game league winning streaks barely intact.

UAB (17-8, 7-3) is the last CUSA team to beat Memphis, 715 days earlier.

Douglas-Roberts had 32 points and seven rebounds. Antonio Anderson added 27 points and four 3-pointers for the Tigers. They combined to make 22 shots, the rest of the team just six.

The tune was the same at the end.

The Tigers missed nine consecutive shots before Anderson's 3-pointer from the corner cut the deficit 77-73 with 1:22 left. After a UAB miss, Douglas-Roberts drilled a 3 with 38 seconds remaining to trim the deficit to one point.

With 15 seconds left, Robert Vaden then made one of two free throws setting up the final sequences. Douglas-Roberts spun and hit a shot over Vaden, who fouled him.

Vaden scored 27 points and made four 3s for the Blazers after missing the previous game with a groin injury. Memphis native Kinnard added 19 points and 11 boards.

The Tigers tied Texas' 1913-17 teams for the eighth-best regular-season winning streak at 44 games.

Memphis trailed by two points at the half for the second straight game, but this time didn't respond to the challenge.

Vaden's 3-pointer over two defenders at the buzzer gave the Blazers a 43-41 halftime lead. The Tigers had fallen behind 27-16 with only Douglas-Roberts hitting his shots. He made five of his seven attempts over the opening 12 minutes while the rest of the team was a combined 1-of-9.

# Lo Duca on Mitchell: 'I made a mistake'

**VIERA, Fla.** (AP)—Addressing his inclusion in the Mitchell Report for the first time, Nationals catcher Paul Lo Duca acknowledged what he called "a mistake" - without coming right out and explaining exactly what he was apologizing for.

The four-time All-Star was among the more prominent players cited in baseball investigator George Mitchell's report on drug use in the sport, which was released Dec. 13. That was two days after Washington announced it signed Lo Duca to a $5 million, one-year contract.

"You do something wrong in your life and you get away with it, you still have something inside you that burns," Lo Duca said, his shoulders slumping and his fingers fidgeting with the folds of his orange T-shirt. "And, um, it's been a big relief for me to know that I've come to grips with it. That I made a mistake."

His name appears 37 times in the 409-page report, which said he received shipments of human growth hormone from—and put other players in touch with—admitted steroid distributor Kirk Radomski, a former New York Mets clubhouse employee. Radomski pleaded guilty in April.

Lo Duca was completely silent on the matter for more than two months. But Saturday, he issued a statement through the team in the morning, saying: "In regards to Senator Mitchell's Report, I apologize ... for mistakes in judgment I made in the past."

Then he held a news conference shortly after arriving at Washington's spring training facility in the afternoon. Even then, Lo Duca was not very expansive.

Asked whether the Mitchell Report was accurate about him, Lo Duca said: "I'm not going to comment on that."

When another reporter asked what he was apologizing for, Lo Duca replied, "Come on, bro'. Next question."

It was reminiscent of New York Yankees slugger Jason Giambi's non-detailed apology in February 2005, a few months after it had been reported that he told a federal grand jury in 2003 he took steroids. At no point did Giambi explicitly say why he was apologizing, nor did he ever use the word "steroids."

With general manager Jim Bowden and manager Manny Acta standing silently nearby, leaning against a wall, Lo Duca sat at a glass table while taking questions. He spoke about the Mitchell Report for about five minutes, before a team spokesman said the topic should change to "baseball questions."

Radomski was one of the main sources for Mitchell's work. He gave Mitchell's investigators copies of checks he said were from Lo Duca, each in the amount of $3,200. Radomski said those were for HGH.

The report also included handwritten notes from Lo Duca to Radomski, one of which was seized from Radomski's house during a search by federal agents and read, in part: "Kirk, Sorry! But for some reason they sent the check back to me." Another note in the report read: "Thanks, call me if you need anything! Paul."

Asked why he did not speak about what Mitchell wrote sooner, Lo Duca said: "Offseason's my offseason, and when the baseball season started back up, I wanted to take care of this issue. ... I thought today—with my agent, we thought today—would be the best day to release it."

He played for the Mets the past two years, then moved to the Nationals as a free agent. Lo Duca, who turns 36 during the first month of the 2008 season, had left knee surgery last month and is expected to miss most of spring training.

The target is to be playing in exhibition games by March 15, and before then he plans to sit on a milk crate to do some catching in the bullpen.

"I really, really feel confident I'm going to be ready for opening day," Lo Duca said. "There's been no setbacks."

Bowden and Acta have both agreed with that assessment.

In 10 major league seasons with the Dodgers, Marlins and Mets, Lo Duca has batted .288 with 80 homers and 466 RBIs. Last year, though, his numbers were .272, nine homers, 54 RBIs.

"So that I can focus on making positive contributions and avoid creating further distractions, I respectfully decline to comment any further on the content of the Mitchell Report," Lo Duca said in the statement, which he read aloud at the start of the news conference.

Acta and Lo Duca's new teammates were supportive.

"It's not a distraction. It's over," first baseman Nick Johnson said. "He's a gamer out there, doing what it takes to win."

Acta, Lo Duca's third base coach with the Mets in 2006, said earlier in the day: "Frankly my dear, I'm ready to talk about something else other than that stuff, because I'm really kind of tired of it. ... I'm glad he has apologized and admitted it."

Lo Duca was the only current member of the Nationals named in the Mitchell Report.

He also was the only player to hold a news conference at Space Coast Stadium during 2008 spring training so far.

At one point—perhaps forgetting for a moment that he was linked to drug use and that he injured his knee so badly during a workout that he needed an operation—Lo Duca summed up his past few months this way: "So it's been a good offseason."

# Sta. Lucia overcomes finals jitters to claim Game 1

## Williams, veterans Espino and Aquino surprise Purefoods stoppers

**MANILA, Philippines**—The Sta. Lucia Realtors must be really obsessed to win another championship.

Driven by that hunger, the Realtors overcame championship jitters and defeated the Purefoods TJ Giants, 109-97, Friday night in the opener of the 2007-08 Smart PBA Philippine Cup Finals at the Araneta Coliseum.

The Realtors turned the game around late in the third quarter as the Giants eventually tired out in the face of Sta. Lucia's tenacious defense.

"We started slow. Championship jitters caught up with the guys. We also tried different looks at defending Purefoods and it backfired. But to the credit of my players, they managed to recover and stepped up when they had to," said Sta. Lucia coach Boyet Fernandez during the post-game news conference.

"We didn't come to the Finals to play catch up," he quickly added.

Kelly Williams found his rhythm in the last 12 minutes after struggling for three quarters, providing the finishing touches in the decisive period to cap Sta. Lucia's amazing comeback.

He led all scorers with 24 points, including 14 in the fourth. He also grabbed 12 rebounds, had two assists, one steal and a shot block.

Game Two of the best-of-seven series is set Sunday also at the Araneta Coliseum.

The Giants, used to the pressure of championship atmosphere, dictated the pace in the first half.

But Sta. Lucia's defense eventually took its toll on the Giants, who committed 20 turnovers and gave up 25 points.

"We'll live and die by our defense," proclaimed Fernandez. "For us, it's the only way to win this championship."

Purefoods coach Ryan Gregorio gave no alibis for the loss.

"We didn't know how to make stops. I thought we did a good job when we forced them with 5 turnovers in the first quarter. But our ability to create turnovers took its toll on us. Ultimately we shot ourselves in the foot," observed Gregorio.

"I don't think physically we're ready to defend them in transition. I thought we have no problem on defense. I guess we have a lot of adjustments to make," he added.

The Purefoods coach also stressed that the Giants must not allow the Realtors to score over 100 points every game. And if they do, Gregorio believes, "No way we could win this series."

Dennis Espino scored 20, Nelbert Omolon had 16 and Marlou Aquino contributed 13, seven rebounds, three assists and two blocks in a sterling performance that helped the Realtors get back in the game.

A three-pointer by Christian Coronel put the Realtors ahead 74-72 before Mark Pingris tied it with a jumper in the ensuing play.

Both teams went scoreless for quite a spell before Denok Miranda completed a three-point play, and then scored an eight-footer as Sta. Lucia ended the third on top, 79-74.

The Realtors stretched the lead to 91-81 on a 3-pointer by Norman Gonzales and a free throw by Williams with 7:17 remaining.

The Giants never got closer than six points the rest of the way as they missed easy shots and kept turning the ball over.

**Sta. Lucia 109** – Williams 24, Espino 20, Omolon 16, Aquino 13, Yeo 11, Miranda 11, Gonzales 8, Coronel 4, Reyes 2, Daa 0.

**Purefoods 97** – J. Yap 22, Raymundo 16, R. Yap 15, Pingris 12, Simon 11, Adducul 11, Lanete 8, Salvador 2, Sanz 0, Yee 0.

**Quarters:** 19-26; 46-55; 79-74; 109-97. ***(www.pba.com.ph)***

## PATRIOTS

*From Page 28*

### JUNIOR LEAGUE
### Jets 25, Fielders 0

The Jets used a 12-run second inning and McGarette Duenas belted the season's first home run to zip past the Fielders.

The Fielders' bullpen was peppered with 12 hits and they gave up a season-high 13 walks to the Jets.

### SENIOR LEAGUE
### Jets 13, Fielders 5

The Jets duplicated their Junior League counterparts and defeated the Fielders, 13-5, on Saturday.

Juan Iguel pitched 3.3 innings, giving up one hit—a lead off solo home run to Ben Flores in the first inning—to the Fielders. He also struck out six Fielders and gave up one walk.

### Dolphins 13, Lion King 1

On Sunday, Ton Rogolifoi pitched in no relief to lead the PTI Dolphins to a 13-1 crushing of the Lion King.

Rogolifoi held the Kings to one run on three hits fanning five and walking three.

### BIG LEAGUE
### Jets 7, Falcons 4

Jesse Borja went perfect at the plate, 4-for-4 as the Jets downed the Falcons, 7-4.

Borja had a triple, three singles, scored two runs, and had two RBIs for the Jets.

Shane Yamada had a no-relief effort on the mound and limited the Falcons to nine hits while striking out four and walking two batters.

Action resumes in the four divisions at the "Tan Ge" and Francisco M. Palacios fields in President's Day today.

## HEO-RACE

*From Page 28*

be played at 8am today with Christian Miller taking on Rafael Jones, while Lucas Nutting will face Jake Lee. The winners move on to the 3pm finals at AMP.

The boys' 9-and-under crown will be played at 9am today with Chris Cajigan facing Colin Ramsey, while Tammy Ackerman clashes with Gabi Race for the girls' 9-and-under title at 1pm. Both games will be at AMP.

In the mixed up doubles, Imazato and Chris Cajigan beat Mailman and Andrew Johnson to arrange a semifinal showdown with Minor and Ramsey, who defeated Adrian De Luna and Miller.

Son teamed up with Gabi Race to score an 8-6 win over Boyet Minor and Quintin Ramsey, 8-6. Son and Race will face the winner of the quarterfinal match between the pairs of Dominic von Siebenthal and Daniel Camacho and Steve Nutting and Tomy Choi.

Over 100 players joined the Coconut Classic, which is the first tournament of the year organized by the Northern Mariana Islands Tennis Association. A total of 46 pairs, or 92 players, have played in the "mixed up" doubles.

## BANMI

*From Page 28*

suspensions, while Josh Sablan was meted out a one-year ban. Palacios was given a lighter sentence and would only sit out for six months.

BANMI also decided to permanently ban Team Ulloa's with the remaining players, other than those suspended, free to reorganize under a different team name or join other teams.

All four players suspended and the team were given one month to appeal the BANMI ruling.

This is not the first time that BANMI suspended a player. In June 2005, BANMI also suspended Fred Pelisamen and Henry Sablan for unsportsmanlike conduct in the BANMI 25-and-under Basketball League.

Pelisamen was suspended for one year, while Henry Sablan was meted a lesser punishment and sat out the season for a few months.

## PLAYERS

*From Page 28*

ers. "They should ask their players to have regular check up or to consult a doctor if they feel something is wrong."

He said checkups are usually free since employers shoulder the costs. "All they need to do is ask a referral letter from their personnel where they are working."

Espino said what happened to Alegre should serve as a lesson to all players. "Even though you play basketball or any sport, and live an active lifestyle this does not mean that you are healthy. You should also have a regular check up."

Aqua Resort Club coach Emi Brigino also supported the plan of having a first aid seminar to all players. "I fully support that move. I am in favor and agree with the proposal of players undergoing basic CPR training."

Brigino said that idea already came up during one of his informal talks with Pacific Development Inc.'s Mario Espeleta, who used to be involved in the Mobil Co-Ed League. "It's about time that we have this kind of activity to prevent incidents like this in the future. Right now organizer only let the players sign a waiver in each league they are going to play at."

SAIPAN TRIBUNE

The late Ric Alegre is seen here in a file photo from the 2006 UFO Inter-Color Basketball League.

Basketball Association of the Northern Mariana Islands president Elias Rangamar said that he felt saddened that Alegre became the example. "[Let it] be a lesson to all players. It is really sad that [Alegre] was the first person to suffer. We should also view [Alegre's] death positively that even if you play basketball or any sport, it does not mean that you are healthy."

Several observers also hinted that the hotel league should also adjust their schedule to let players get some rest after work before playing. Alegre just came from an eight-hour shift then went to the Ada gym to play for Aqua Resort.

Brigino said the final viewing of Alegre's remains would be on Feb. 22, Friday, with the venue and time to be announced at a late date. Alegre's relatives are eyeing to hold the final viewing either at Kristo Rai or San Jose church.

Alegre's remains will be brought back to his hometown in San Fernando, La Union, which is located north of Manila. Alegre, who arrived on Saipan in 1993, was born on Oct. 6, 1968 in Sta. Lucia, Ilocos Sur, which is in the northern Philippines, but grew up in La Union.

## TRIBUNE SPORTS SCORES

### NORTHERN TRUST OPEN SCORES

**Third Round**

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Phil Mickelson | 68-64-70 | 202 |
| Jeff Quinney | 69-67-67 | 203 |
| John Rollins | 68-70-69 | 207 |
| Stuart Appleby | 69-70-69 | 208 |
| Vaughn Taylor | 67-70-71 | 208 |
| Scott Verplank | 68-69-71 | 208 |
| J.B. Holmes | 74-66-69 | 209 |
| Mark Wilson | 70-70-69 | 209 |
| Luke Donald | 68-71-70 | 209 |
| K.J. Choi | 65-73-71 | 209 |
| Charlie Wi | 70-68-71 | 209 |
| Padraig Harrington | 69-69-71 | 209 |
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| Joe Durant | 71-70-69 | 210 |
| Dustin Johnson | 68-73-69 | 210 |
| Steve Marino | 69-70-71 | 210 |
| Ryuji Imada | 71-69-70 | 210 |
| Zach Johnson | 72-67-71 | 210 |
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| Brandt Jobe | 71-68-71 | 210 |
| Chad Campbell | 67-70-73 | 210 |
| Angel Cabrera | 68-73-70 | 211 |
| Lucas Glover | 72-69-70 | 211 |
| Steve Stricker | 71-69-71 | 211 |
| David Toms | 71-68-72 | 211 |
| Billy Mayfair | 68-69-74 | 211 |
| Robert Allenby | 70-66-75 | 211 |
| Pat Perez | 69-72-71 | 212 |
| Adam Scott | 73-69-70 | 212 |
| Nathan Green | 72-70-70 | 212 |
| Hunter Mahan | 68-74-70 | 212 |
| George McNeill | 72-69-71 | 212 |
| Paul Casey | 73-70-69 | 212 |
| Fred Couples | 70-70-72 | 212 |
| Craig Barlow | 69-74-69 | 212 |
| Brad Adamonis | 72-71-69 | 212 |
| Kevin Sutherland | 70-69-73 | 212 |
| Tom Pernice, Jr. | 72-72-68 | 212 |
| Marc Turnesa | 75-70-67 | 212 |
| Tag Ridings | 75-68-70 | 213 |
| Alex Cejka | 68-72-73 | 213 |
| Jeff Overton | 74-69-70 | 213 |
| Rory Sabbatini | 72-67-74 | 213 |
| Peter Lonard | 69-70-74 | 213 |
| Scott McCarron | 72-65-76 | 213 |
| Vijay Singh | 71-72-71 | 214 |
| Ryan Moore | 72-71-71 | 214 |
| Bart Bryant | 74-69-71 | 214 |
| Jason Gore | 71-72-71 | 214 |
| Toru Taniguchi | 72-71-71 | 214 |
| Matt Kuchar | 73-71-70 | 214 |
| Sergio Garcia | 74-71-69 | 214 |
| Kevin Na | 66-76-73 | 215 |
| Charles Howell III | 71-70-74 | 215 |
| Bill Haas | 72-71-72 | 215 |
| Chez Reavie | 73-71-71 | 215 |
| Fred Funk | 74-70-71 | 215 |
| Kenny Perry | 72-73-70 | 215 |
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| Cameron Beckman | 74-70-72 | 216 |
| Cody Freeman | 70-74-72 | 216 |
| Aaron Baddeley | 73-70-74 | 217 |
| Ben Curtis | 70-71-76 | 217 |
| Dean Wilson | 71-72-74 | 217 |
| Ben Crane | 70-74-73 | 217 |
| Bo Van Pelt | 71-74-72 | 217 |
| Fredrik Jacobson | 72-73-72 | 217 |
| Carl Pettersson | 70-74-74 | 218 |
| Kevin Streelman | 75-69-74 | 218 |
| Michael Allen | 75-70-73 | 218 |
| Will MacKenzie | 71-73-75 | 219 |
| Shigeki Maruyama | 71-74-74 | 219 |
| Eric Axley | 71-72-78 | 221 |

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

### LOCAL SCORES

**NMIVA Indoor Standings**
**Men's Division**

| | W | L | PF | PA | SW |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Menudo | 7 | 2 | 563 | 435 | 22 |
| Fanians | 6 | 3 | 538 | 491 | 17 |
| No Fear | 6 | 3 | 560 | 523 | 16 |
| Islanders | 5 | 4 | 497 | 520 | 13 |
| Ol'Aces | 5 | 4 | 527 | 536 | 13 |
| Home Boyz | 4 | 5 | 519 | 524 | 14 |
| CH-Hammer | 4 | 5 | 525 | 508 | 13 |
| Beach Jammers | 2 | 6 | 429 | 499 | 6 |
| Ma Numel'u | 1 | 8 | 451 | 571 | 6 |

**Women's Division**

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pikan Gaga | 6 | 0 | 380 | 320 | 13 |
| Seikid | 3 | 3 | 343 | 340 | 10 |
| Beach Jammers | 3 | 4 | 393 | 426 | 9 |
| YoYo's | 3 | 4 | 418 | 431 | 9 |
| Ta Chagi | 1 | 5 | 325 | 350 | 7 |

PF-Points scored by team
PA-Points scored against team
SW-Sets won

# Evenflow survives to live another day

By MARK RABAGO
mark_rabago@saipantribune.com
ASSISTANT EDITOR

Evenflow took one of two games against No-Use as the best-of-five finals of the 2007-2008 World Organized Rocball Community League continued last Saturday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

No-Use won Game 1 last Feb. 9 and rode that momentum to victory in Game 2 in last Saturday's doubleheader.

With just a victory separating No-Use from taking home the 2007-2007 community league championship, Evenflow rose to the occasion and took Game 3 to live another day.

Game 4—and if needed Game 5—of the No Use-Evenflow championship showdown will be played today, President's Day Feb. 18, at the MHS Gym.

In Saturday night's first game, No Use juiced out Evenflow in four sets, 106-95. Evenflow won the first set, 27-25, but No-Use took the second set, 28-26.

The difference of play in the third set came from No-Use's David Tisa with a three-point play and a few shank serves by Evenflow. The score after two sets of the first game was tied 53-53 going into the third.

In the third set, No-Use opened up an eight-point lead by winning the third set, 27-19, and finished the set with 80 game points as against Evenflow's 72 game points. In order to win the first game, No-Use only had to win the fourth set.

Evenflow, meanwhile, needed a nine-point victory margin in the fourth set to win the game or win the set with less than nine points to send it into overtime.

In the fourth set, No-Use and Evenflow played tight offense and defense, there were no shank serves, neither team got xunked, and no goals were scored. But No-Use outscored Evenflow in two-point plays, 7-5, and won the set 26 to 23 to hand them Game 2.

In Game 3, Evenflow and No-Use fought a psychological game of willpower with Evenflow squeaking out a 25-24 win in the first set.

No-Use scored a three-point play and six two-point plays in the first set. Evenflow mixed up their game with kills and dinks, scored five two-point plays and won the set on one-point court plays.

MARK RABAGO
Evenflow players pose for a photo after Game 2 of their best-of-five championship series against No-Use in the 2007-2008 World Organized Rocball Community League last Saturday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

In the second set, Evenflow stayed with their game plan, mixed up their plays, scored four two-point plays, and outplayed No-Use one point at a time, 13-3. In the end, No-Use only scored three two-points plays in the second set.

In the third set, Evenflow jumped out to a 10-0 lead before No-Use was able to score a point. Evenflow went on to take another large lead, 20-12, before No-Use was able to make a modest comeback.

When No-Use started to score, Enenflow lost a little confidence, choked, and shanked four serves before finishing strong to win, 27-19.

No-Use was trailing Evenflow 61-78 going into the fourth set and would have had to win the fourth set by a margin of 18 points to win Game 3.

With that kind of point spread, No-Use's only hope of taking the series via sweep was to win the fourth set by any margin, block Evenflow from juicing out, and force the game into overtime.

But Evenflow has other plans and postured for victory. When the score of the fourth set was 10-8 in favor of Evenflow, Terson Eina of No-Use shocked Evenflow with a three-point goal that gave his team a temporary lead at 11-10.

Evenflow rebounded from No-Use's three-point play with a two-point backcourt score that put them back in the lead, 12-11. Then Evenflow's Typhoon Saito exploded for a net kill for a three-point goal to increase Evenflow's lead 15-11.

After Saito's goal, Evenflow tightened up their defense and went on to close out the fourth set 25-13 to win Game 3.

# Ma Numel'u ends six-game slide

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Ma Numel'u put an end to its six-game slide in the men's division, while Seikid moved to second place in the women's side as action in the 2008 Indoor Volleyball Winter League continued Thursday night at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

Ma Numel'u pulled a fast one against the veteran Ol'Aces squad, 25-16, 20-25, 15-10, to revive its sagging campaign in the three-month league. Only one team will be knocked out after the double-elimination round with the top eight teams moving to the playoffs.

Despite the win, the young but talented Ma Numel'u side remained at the cellar with a 1-8 record just 1 1/2 games behind the Beach Jammers' 2-6 mark.

Menudo continues to lead the nine-team field with a 7-2 card followed closely by the 6-3 slates of Fanians' and No Fear. Islanders and Ol'Aces are in the middle of the standings with similar 5-4 marks.

Home Boyz, after a 3-1 start and a share of the lead in the early goings of the league, is slowly dropping to the bottom half of the standings as they hold a 4-5 mark similar to CH-Hammer.

Fanians and No Fear dispatched separate powerhouse opponents to remain within striking distance of league-leading Menudo.

Fanians was pushed to the limit by Islanders before escaping with a 25-23, 25-17, 11-15, while No Fear dispatched the slipping Home Boyz, 25-20, 25-21, 15-17.

No Fear was in full control of the first set, scoring seven straight points that turned a 15-13 lead into a 22-13 advantage. Home Boyz, however, answered with its own run to close in at 20-22.

No Fear, however, displayed steady nerves in the final stretch and scored the last five points to close the set.

The same story happened in the second set where No Fear, from a 20-all count, scored the last five points to wrap up the contest.

It was only in the third set that Home Boyz showed the same form that brought them into a share of the lead in the early goings of the league, winning it at 17-15.

League-leading Menudo completed a three-set sweep of CH-Hammer, 25-22, 25-20, 15-12, in the other match.

In the women's side, Seikid moved to second place after dealing Ta Chagi a 25-13, 18-25, 15-6 beating, while YoYo's pushed Beach Jammers to the limit before pulling off a 38-20, 25-23, 16-14 win.

High-flying volleyball action resumes tomorrow with Menudo opening up the games in the men's division by facing Beach Jammers, while Islanders and CH-Hammer try to snap separate three-game slumps when they clash in the second match.

Ol'Aces and Home Boyz will also attempt to end their respective losing skids when they collide at 8pm, while No Fear closes out the day's schedule when they meet Ma Numel'u in the 9pm nightcap.

In the women's division, Pikan Gaga shoots for its seventh straight win when they trade spikes, digs, and blocks with Seikid, while Ta Chagi battles YoYo's in the second game. Beach Jammers will have a bye.

JON PEREZ
Home Boyz's Kaleo Olaitiman, right, tries to block a drop shot by a No Fear player in their game in the men's division of the 2008 Indoor Volleyball Winter League Thursday night at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

# USSP to host Presidents Day pool tonight

Nothing to do this Presidents Day? Try USS Peleliu Club's 8-ball Tournament at 8pm tonight.

"This one's just for fun, with a $5 entry fee," according to USSP Club owner Ken Phillips. "Its winner-take-all. We can't promise a trip to the White House Billiard Room, but second through fifth place are good for Presidents' giveaways."

The tournament will be using a double-elimination format.

After today, the tournaments are back on their regular schedule with a $5 entry fee. Monday will be for 9-ball and Wednesday for 8-ball. The games start at 8pm and the sign-up sheet closes at 9pm.

For more information about today's Presidents Day 8-ball and the regular weekly 8-ball and 9-ball tournaments, please contact Rose or Ken Phillips at 233-1984. ***(USSP)***

# Daily rosary for Alegre at CHC chapel

Relatives of the late Ric Alegre are inviting all current and former teammates as well as friends of the late veteran basketball player to join them in the daily 7pm rosary at the Commonwealth Health Center chapel.

The rosary started last Thursday night and will run up to Friday, Feb. 22, before Alegre's remains is brought back to San Fernando, La Union, which is in the northern part of the Philippines.

Alegre's sister Irene Valencia is also arranging a final viewing of his brother's remains at the Kristo Rai church on Feb. 22.

However, this is not yet final and Valencia said they would inform everyone if there are any changes.

Inter-Hotel Basketball League coordinator Lito Espino will also send out letters to all participating hotels in the HANMI Cup to ask for donations to help Alegre's family.

Espino said he would give letters to representatives of Aqua Resort Club, Aquarius Beach Tower, Hafadai Beach Hotel, Hyatt Regency Saipan, Pacific Islands Club, Saipan World Resort, Century Hotel, Fiesta Resort & Spa, and Saipan Grand Hotel.

The 39-year-old Alegre, who is considered the heart-and-soul of every team that he played with, died Wednesday night during Aqua Resort Club's game against Hyatt Regency Saipan.

Alegre was born on Oct. 6, 1968 in Sta. Lucia Ilocos Sur, north of the Philippines, but grew up in San Fernando, La Union. He arrived on Saipan in 1993.

Aside from being a player Alegre, who is a former CNMI National team member, also coached teams to numerous titles and officiated games in the youth leagues. ***(Jon Perez)***

Alegre

**Evenflow survives to live another day**

Evenflow took one of two games against No-Use as the best-of-five finals of the 2007-2008 World Organized Rocball Community League continued last Saturday at the Marianas High School Gymnasium.

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

**Howard soars inspectacular dunk contest**

Look, up in the sky! It's a bird. It's a plane. It's Dwight Howard–super slam dunk champion. A red cape trailing behind him, Orlando's man of steel made like Superman and won perhaps the best dunk contest.

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# Patriots start season on winning note

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

**Defending champion SaipanCell Patriots started off its bid for a third straight title in the Majors division of the Saipan Little League with a win on Saturday at the Miguel Basa "Tan Ge" Pangelinan Field.**

**Action in the four divisions of the Saipan Little League began on Saturday after the league opened its 2008 season on Feb. 8.**

**The Patriots coasted to a 22-2 decision over Hustlers I in the first game of the Majors division.**

**The Patriots' high-octane offense started out slow as Hustlers' pitcher Henry Lizama held them to three runs in the first two innings.**

**But the Patriots were just warming things up and Jeremey Rabauliman, with two outs, had a stand up double to start things off for the Thelma Mizer-managed squad.**

**All hell break loose after Rabauliman's double as Lizama cracked under pressure against the Patriots' hitters as he was tagged with six runs on three hits after that while walking two batters.**

**Jared Sablan pitched four innings for the Patriots allowing the Hustlers to two runs on four hits with two walks and a season-high 10 strikeouts.**

**In other Saturday matches, the Tanapag Braves breezed to a 14-4 win over the Kagman Lions; the As Matuis Twins defeated the Pirates, 9-6, while Ol'Aces scored a 10-8 triumph over Team McDonald's.**

**Games resumed yesterday with the Bank of Saipan Red Sox pulling off a 10-6 decision against the PTI Dolphins, while the Athletics eclipsed the Suns, 13-2, and the San Antonio Dragons singed Dare JPO, 11-1.**

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Kagman Lion Hearts pitcher Richard Dela Cruz checks second base runner Diego Camacho of Ol'Aces before throwing a pitch in their game yesterday in the Junior League division of the Saipan Little League at the Francisco M. Palacios Baseball Field.

JON PEREZ

# Players should learn CPR and first aid

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The unexpected death of veteran cager Rick Alegre last week triggered a call that players in various leagues, not only in basketball, should learn how to administer first aid and basic Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation or CPR.

Alegre died last Wednesday, in what could have been a possible heart attack, while playing for Aqua Resort Club against Hyatt Regency Saipan in the 2nd Annual HANMI Cup Inter-Hotel Basketball League at the Gilbert C. Ada Gymnasium.

RELATED NEWS
Daily rosary for Alegre at CHC chapel.
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Pastor Gagarin, who is a close fried of Alegre, suggested that officials of future leagues should conduct basic first aid and CPR in order to prevent further incidents like this in the future.

HANMI Cup coordinator Lito Espino said he is in favor of the idea of having seminars about first aid and CPR before a league opens. "As long as there is someone who is going to do the seminar and it's free. Maybe we could ask somebody from the Commonwealth Health Center to conduct the first aid seminar."

Espino said he had already talked to other basketball organizers and reminded coaches of all teams to become more conscious about the health of their play-

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# Heo-Race finals set in Coconut Classic

JON PEREZ

Ji Hoon Heo eyes the ball while preparing to hit a forehand return in his semifinal match against Nicolas Son yesterday in the men's singles of the Coconut Classic at the American Memorial Park tennis courts.

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

It will be youth versus experience and student against teacher in the men's singles finals of the 2008 Coconut Classic today at American Memorial Park tennis courts.

Top CNMI junior netter Ji Hoon Heo arranged a title showdown with his mentor Jeff Race at 11am today at AMP. Heo grabbed the first finals slot after dispatching Nicolas Son, 8-5, in their semifinal match yesterday.

Heo came back from a 0-3 deficit and 15-40 in the 11th game to score the come-from-behind win.

The score was tied at 5-5 and Son was leading 40-15 in the 11th game when Heo started his comeback.

Heo also scored an 8-3 win over Sonny Decena, who was an 8-2 winner over Brian Hom. Son also defeated Hom, 8-0, to arrange a semifinal showdown with Heo.

Race, meanwhile, cruised to an 8-1 victory over Tomo Imazato in the other semis match yesterday to clinch the second finals berth. Race also defeated Keisuke Takaki, 8-4, while Imazato was fresh from an 8-2 crushing of Eric Abragan.

In the women's singles, Mayuko Arriola and Lila Mailman arranged another finals match after dispatching separate opponents yesterday at the Pacific Islands Club tennis courts.

Arriola downed Matti Buenaventura, 8-3, while Mailman squeezed out a hard-earned 9-7 win over Thea Minor.

Fernando "Nanding" Cajigan and Mike Jang will battle it out for the men's 40-and-over title at 10am today at PIC. Cajgigan defeated Steve Nutting, 8-3, while Jang needed a tiebreak to edge Richard Brostrom, 9-8.

The semifinals of the boys' 13-and-under division will

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# BANMI cracks whip on Ulloa's

By JON PEREZ
jon_perez@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

Basketball Association of the Northern Mariana Islands cracked the whip on Team Ulloa's, banning the squad in all BANMI-organized or administered leagues and tournaments.

The team can still appeal the ruling since BANMI's decision is not final.

BANMI officials discussed and deliberated their decision during their recent meeting at the law office of BANMI secretary general and referees association treasurer Michael A. White. The decision was made using a written report submitted by Rufino Aguon as basis.

Aguon, who is the BANMI referees association president, submitted the written report that included statements from the referees on the Jan. 21 Budweiser Cup match between the Ulloa's and the Southern Sonics, where a record five technical fouls ware slapped against several players in a tightly-fought and highly-emotional playoff match.

After the deliberation, BANMI officials agreed suspend to brothers Josh

JON PEREZ

Joshua Sablan of the D-1 Ulloa's drives past G-Rollers' Vince Teregeyo in this file photo taken in their game in the BANMI-Budweiser Cup Men's Islandwide Basketball League last year.

and John Sablan, their cousin Henry Sablan, and teammate Felix Palacios in all BANMI-organized and administered leagues or tournaments.

Among the four, cousins John and Henry Sablan were given five-year

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